

Battle of Champions

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Category: How to Train Your Dragon

Genre: Adventure

Language: English

Status: Completed

Published: 2012-04-28 18:03:18

Updated: 2014-07-17 07:27:55

Packaged: 2016-04-26 13:27:23

Rating: T

Chapters: 14

Words: 40,615

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: Hiccup is taken to Asgard to fight along side other champions and against others. He now has to deal with fighting a bunch of over sized Vikings while his friends and family deal with trying to find out why he won't wake up. Must read my other stories.

1. Chapter 1

****Okay first chapter. This does a decent job of setting up what pretty much all the characters will be dealing with during this story. Hiccup has to go to Asgard to fight along side other champions and against others.****

****To be honest I was really proud of this chapter. I don't usually brag but I think this was one of my better written chapters. And to be honest it was fun.****

****All credit for the idea goes to an excellent author called "THE NIGHTS RAGE". His idea was great and I think you'll all enjoy it and I really hope he does.****

****Semi unrelated note, I don't know how many people who use this site like rap (I doubt a lot), but there's an Eminem song that if you listen to closely you can really apply to Hiccup. It's called "Cindarella Man". I found awhile ago but never bothered sharing it. Just saying it's a good song to begin with but I can't help but think of Hiccup during a lot of the song.****

****Please review, share and enjoy!****

* * *

><p>Chapter 1<p>

Hiccup walked around the rest of the day in a daze. Stoick didn't know much more than himself but that was just a strange favor. Hiccup

had just gotten used to his new life of popularity and a loving family.

A family made up of him and his father.

When people asked him why he was so out of it, he lied about it. He told them it was nothing. It was something though. But Hiccup did what his dad told him to and kept within the family.

Hiccup didn't even realize that dinner had come. His mind was still swimming.

"Hiccup," Astrid said. Hiccup shook himself out of his trance. He looked at his girlfriend and soon realized all his friends were staring at him from around their table. "What's wrong with you?" she asked.

"It's nothing," he lied. He hated lying to Astrid. Whether it be about Loki or about this new upcoming change in his life he absolutely hated it. "Just trying to think about some stuff,"

"What kind of stuff?" Ruffnut asked.

Hiccup thought it over. Now seemed good a time as any to tell them about the "Youth Gathering" at Trenk. It would be just the distraction he needed to get them off his back.

"Well," Hiccup said. "There's this thing we're going to have to attend in Trenk,"

"Trenk?" Tuffnut said. "The island your dad just got back from?"

"Yep," Hiccup said. "They're calling it a 'Youth Gathering'. All the teens of every tribe have to go to Trenk and I have to teach them about dragons. Or rather, re-teach them,"

They all seemed pretty shocked. That's what had come out of the conference? The teens from Berk didn't know much about the teens from the other tribes. Snotlout gave Hiccup a slightly worried look. Hiccup saw it and acknowledged it.

Hiccup and Snot had seen plenty of the other teens. Especially, the other heirs. Snot didn't worry for himself. He could handle himself. He worried for his cousin. Hiccup had suffered just as much abuse from the other heirs as he had from Snot. Okay maybe not as much considering they didn't see each other that often but it was still pretty bad.

Snot couldn't explain it but he was suddenly angry. Angry because of the way the other heirs treated his cousin. How he treated his cousin. Snot had never apologized for the past. Neither had anyone else but at this moment it ate at him. He clenched a fist. He would have to be the first.

Tomorrow he would ask— No! He would beg for Hiccup's forgiveness.

"Yeah," Hiccup continued. "It's not 'til the summer so we have time to get the guys in Valden riding dragons,"

"That's plenty of time," Tuffnut said.

There were murmurs of agreement. Hiccup was relieved. He was happy that he was able to dodge his true worry.

Hiccup and his friends departed. Hiccup went straight home. He was going to enjoy the sleep he was going to get. Just to have a chance to rest and allow his mind to drift. He was going to need it.

Hiccup walked into his room and removed his helmet. Hiccup took his leg off and stood it up beside his bed. He sat there for a little bit and stared at his stump. He couldn't stop thinking about how the other heirs would react when they saw his leg.

Even Vikings have to have some form of pity. If not pity than respect would be even better. If there was something Vikings respected it was battle scars.

Hiccup allowed himself to fall back onto his bed.

He closed his eyes and drifted off to a blissful sleep.

With Loki

"I need a favor Old Woman," Loki said appearing in the Elder's house.

The Elder didn't jump like Hiccup always did. She was always on her guard. "And what would that be Lord of Tricksters?"

"Don't patronize me Woman," Loki warned. She rolled her eyes. "I need you to keep Stoick from burning his son on a pyre or sending him off to sea."

The Elder was beside herself. "What have you done?"

"Relax," Loki said. "He'll be fine. He's going to be in Asgard for awhile. And as you know humans cannot be brought there in their corporeal form. I have to bring his consciousness there. It's this whole cosmic crap or whatever. His body will be unharmed. It'll even continue breathing. He'll be suspended in time for a couple of days at most. Just keep Father of the Year from giving his son a premature funeral."

The Elder was skeptical. "And just what will he be doing in Asgard?"

"To be honest," Loki said. "It's only between the gods and their champions,"

"So it's one of those?" She said.

Loki froze for a moment and then smacked his palm to his forehead. Had it been any other mortal they wouldn't have picked up on it. "Yes," he said allowing his hand to drop. "So will you do it?"

"Of course I will," the Elder said. "I'm not going to let one of my villagers die without cause,"

"Good," Loki said. "Now if you'll excuse me I have to kidnap a kid's consciousness," He bowed and exited.

The Elder shook her head. Of all the gods that could have picked Hiccup it just had to be Loki.

With Stoick in the morning

That damned dragon was at it again. At this rate he would have no roof on his house. The constant jumping to wake his son. Thank the gods Val didn't do such a thing or Stoick wouldn't have a house.

"Hiccup!" Stoick shouted. "Go and take Toothless for a flight already!" There was no response.

That was strange. Stoick stayed in his bed a short while longer to see if his son would take care of the problem. Alright if the dragon couldn't wake him he would have to.

Stoick rose from his bed and exited his room. He walked the short distance to Hiccup's. He knocked on the door. "Oh come on Boy," he said. "Please make that dragon of yours stop with the banging,"

Still no response. Stoick entered the room. Hiccup lied in his bed. He looked strangely peaceful. Stoick closed the distance to the bed and stared down at his son.

He shook him lightly. "Get up Hiccup," he said. "Toothless is going to bring down the roof,"

Hiccup still didn't move.

Stoick shook him again. Then his heartbeat began to race. "Hiccup!" The Chief shouted. He repeated his actions on the beach many months ago. He was still breathing. His heart still beat. Then what was wrong?

"Hiccup will be fine," The Elder said as she entered Hiccup's room.

"Elder," Stoick said ignoring the fact that she was in his house at all. "What is wrong with my son?"

"Nothing," she said. "He will be fine. He is on a spiritual journey at the moment. That is the best answer I can give you,"

Stoick didn't like it. "What do you mean the best you can give me?"

"I am forbidden to tell you anymore," The Elder said. "Your son will not wake for days but when he does he will be just as healthy as he was when he fell asleep last night."

Stoick begrudgingly accepted the situation. There was nothing he could do.

All he had to do now was try to explain to the tribe where the dragon expert was.

With Hiccup in Asgard

Hiccup woke. His bed felt strangely comfortable. He opened his eyes slowly. The trees around him looked so beautiful in the daylight. The birds that sang seemed to be singing actual songs. There was an amazing aroma of flowers and dew on leaves.

Wait! What?

Hiccup bolted upright. Why in the Hel was he outside? He looked around and realized that he was in some sort of clearing. There was no snow and the forest smelled of springtime. The flowers were blooming and the birds sang and shot through the air.

This certainly wasn't Berk. Hiccup got to his feet. He looked around a bit. Despite the dew on the leaves the grass was relatively dry and provided a good place to sleep.

Wait! (Again)

Hiccup looked down and saw his two feet. They were both there. Now he had an idea as to what was going on.

"Where are you?" Hiccup asked loudly trying to find Loki. There was no response. Hiccup looked around the clearing and saw a group of objects near a narrow path.

Hiccup walked over to the pile. Lying in the grass was his sword, crossbow, helmet, and shield. Hiccup found it kind of ominous that his weapons were lying there. Nonetheless he picked them up and strapped them in where they needed to be strapped.

Hiccup then decided that the best option he had was to follow the path.

Hiccup didn't walk long until he came to another clearing. This time he wasn't alone.

Gathered together were three adult Vikings. They were standing and talking. Judging from the looks on their faces they were as confused as Hiccup.

One was an older looking man but he still appeared to be in good shape. His beard was black but had specks of white in it. He held a spear in his hand. His skin was somewhat tanned and he just looked as if he spent most of his days on the sea.

The other was a younger man. He looked how any heroic Viking should look. He had a short beard and his skin was still unscarred. His hair was blonde and his eyes blue. He held his mighty axe with great ease.

The final Viking he saw was a strikingly beautiful woman. She too was blonde and had sapphire blue eyes. While she seemed delicate and pretty she too gave off the feeling of a warrior. Her own axe attested to that.

From what Hiccup could tell about the clearing. They had all found their ways here. Including his own there were a total of five

paths.

Then they noticed him. The younger man looked at him and sneered. "Another child," he said.

_Another? _As Hiccup walked further toward the group he noticed a girl about his age sitting on a rock past them. She wore all black and her hair was likewise. She had a weapon next to her. It was a mace made of blackened steel. _No way._

"Svartur?" Hiccup asked.

The girl's head shot up from its downward angle to look at him. "Hiccup?"

The two walked toward each other and quickly embraced. "Oh good at least the children know each other." Said the younger man.

They broke from their hug and ignored the man. "How have you been?" Hiccup asked her.

"Fine," she replied. "I'd ask you but I've heard all the stories." She looked down. Her brow furled. "I thought you lost your leg,"

Hiccup grabbed the back of his neck. "The thing is," he said. "I did. I went to sleep last night in my bed and with one leg,"

"Me too," she said. "Well I had two legs," Hiccup laughed slightly.

A word of explanation would be appreciated probably. Venn wasn't Hiccup's _only_ friend. She was his closest and oldest but Hiccup had others. Unfortunately, they all lived on different islands.

Svartur was like Hiccup in a different way than Venn was. While Venn wasn't much of a warrior, Svartur excelled at it. She was great. But she was an outcast like Hiccup. Despite her amazing skill the teens of her village didn't like her. She always wore black and was kind of a dark person. They didn't care to look past that and see she was a nice, caring and funny person.

And she was the first heir of the Massive Slayers Tribe.

So to recap she's an outcast and an heir. One can see how Hiccup and her would become friends.

The older man picked up on their conversation. "Wait," he said. He pointed at Hiccup. "_You're_ Hiccup? As in the rider of the Night Fury? The slayer of the island sized dragon?"

Man this story really did spread. Hiccup nodded. "How did you hear about me?"

The man let out a chuckle. "I'm a fisherman Boy," The man said. "Telling stories is what we do best," It was a valid point.

The younger man began to laugh. "You?" he said. "You're supposed to be the great hero that stopped the war? I've eaten lamb bigger than you!"

"I really don't care what you think," Hiccup said plainly.

The man was angered by this. He walked right up to Hiccup and allowed his hand to shoot to Hiccup's throat. He lifted him off the ground. "I'll make you care you insolent!"

He stopped. He had a spear head resting on his neck. "Put him down," the older man said. "I don't care who you are. I will not allow any children to die if I can stop it,"

The younger man let Hiccup down. Hiccup reached for his throat. He gasped for air. Svartur helped him stay on his feet. She leaned down to his ear because he was hunched over slightly. "Just like old times huh?" she whispered.

Despite the pain around his neck and the lack of air in his lungs Hiccup laughed. Back during conferences when the heirs would be left alone Hiccup and Svartur would be bullied both physically and verbally.

The woman finally spoke up. "We can't sit here at each other's throats,"

Literally.

"We should be working together to find out what is going on," The woman continued.

There were nods. Now that the tension was defused the Vikings got to introductions. The older man was a fisherman named Fiskaren. He hailed from the Scruffy Barbarians Tribe. He had gone with the tribe's dignitaries to the conference in Trenk.

The younger man was a heroic warrior from the Southern Crushers. His name was Stolt. He was known for being an amazing dragon killer. He bragged about a set of horns he said he ripped from a Nightmare with his bare hand as it pleaded for mercy. Hiccup already didn't like the man.

The woman's name was Vakker. She came from the Reckless Pillagers. Her beauty was widely known but she had refused to marry as of yet. She refused because she wanted a man to love her for more than her looks.

"Well that's all well and good," Stolt said. "But how in the hell are we supposed to figure out what's going on here?"

"I believe I can help with that," A new woman said.

With Snotlout

Snot was walking toward his cousin's house. It was only a little while before breakfast. He was hoping Hiccup had come down from his flight by now.

Snot was anxious. He wanted to get this apology over with.

Snot was working on the words he would use when he saw a distraught Stoick leaving his house. Stoick had just gotten done with making his

son comfortable before leaving for the day. He would make sure that he returned earlier than normal.

"Hey Uncle Stoick," Snot said. "Is Hiccup home?"

Stoick deflated a little bit. Of all the days his cousin could have chosen to visit him. "Well Snotlout, Hiccup doesn't feel well. He'll be staying at home for a while. And I'm sure he could use his rest."

"It'll only take a minute," Snot said.

"No he needs to sleep," Stoick insisted.

But Snotlout wouldn't have it. "Please," he said. "Uncle Stoick it's important."

Stoick thought it over in his head. He finally sighed. He began to walk toward his house with Snotlout in tow.

They reached Hiccup's room. Stoick opened the door. They entered. Snot saw his peaceful looking cousin.

Snotlout turned pale. Had his cousin died? Would he have to go through his whole life with the guilt of never apologizing? He couldn't come up with words.

"He'll be fine," Stoick said trying to reassure his nephew and himself.

"Why is asleep?" Snot asked.

"I don't know," he said. "The Elder appears to but she can't tell me,"

"How long is going to be like this?" Snot asked. He couldn't believe how concerned he was for his cousin.

"The Elder says days," Stoick said.

Snot cringed. So much for getting it over with. Snot didn't know what to do.

"What was it you needed him for?" Stoick asked.

Snot became uncomfortable. He didn't want to lie to his uncle and Chief but he also didn't want to reveal his plans for apologizing to Hiccup. He felt it made him look like an attention grabber. He wanted to do this privately.

"It was justâ€¦" Snot grabbed the back of his neck. "I justâ€¦"

"It was something private," Stoick said. Snot nodded.

"Understood,"

Snot didn't want to leave.

"You're welcome to keep him company," Stoick said. "But I have to get to the Hall,"

Snot nodded. He was admittedly worried for Hiccup. And whenever he woke up Snot would be here to get the apology over with.

With Hiccup

"And just who are you?" Stolt asked the strange woman.

The woman wore all black. She was beautiful and her clothes were elegant to match. She was somewhat small but held a feeling of power.

"I am Nott," she said. "Goddess of the Night,"

Stolt nearly let out a laugh but Hiccup was able to stop him. Stolt looked at the boy. Hiccup's face was unmistakable. He knew the woman wasn't joking. He had dealt with gods for too long now.

"I greet you on behalf of all the gods," Nott said. "You have all been taken here for a special purpose. You are all champions. And as champions you will fight for the gods who have blessed you. There has been a challenge issued by Thor and his supporters against Loki and his."

"So we get to fight Loki's champions?" Stolt asked getting excited to fight against the most distrusted god in Norse theology.

"No," Nott said. "You will be fighting _for _Loki," Stolt was about to start yelling but Nott held up a hand. "You are not Loki's champion. But the god who has blessed you has chosen to support Loki."

"And what god is that?" Stolt asked wondering what pathetic god had chosen him and then had the nerve to make him fight for Loki.

"You are Heimdall's champion," Nott said.

Stolt suddenly felt honored but shocked as well. He was going to ask a question but Nott stopped him.

"Loki's champion will answer all your questions on the reason the god's are fighting and why certain god's are supporting others. Right now I need to specify whose champions you are. Finkaren, you are Njord's champion. Vakker you are Lofn's. And Svartur, you are mine."

They all seemed pretty shocked. The gods had all picked them as their champions. It was something that seemed difficult to comprehend.

"I need to be on my way," Nott said.

"Wait!" Svartur said. "What about Hiccup? Why is he here?"

"Well," Nott said. "Do the math?"

All the Vikings thought it over and suddenly took a step away from Hiccup. Even Svartur. He had expected as much as soon as Nott began telling them their gods.

Nott disappeared. She did not envy Hiccup at the moment.

"Hiccup," Svartur said. "You knew you were Loki's champion,"

Hiccup nodded. "For a couple weeks. He visits me a lot. He told me what's going on with the gods. As arrogant as this sounds, it's about me. The gods don't know what to do with me. So Loki blessed me to ensure Thor wouldn't kill me."

"Why would Thor want to kill you?" Finkaren said.

"He says it's for disrupting the balance by training the dragons," Hiccup said. He gestured for them to sit down.

It was going to be a long story.

Hiccup went on to explain his quest to find Onska. He explained why Nott supported him. The whole Night Fury thing. He wasn't sure about Lofn or Njord. But then he got to Heimdall. They all wanted to know why Loki's greatest enemy was now an avid supporter.

"Well," Hiccup said. "He said it's to prevent Ragnarok," Hiccup went onto explain what little he knew about the balance of the world and what he could tell about how he played a role.

After he was done getting everyone up to speed he explained that Thor probably challenge Loki to this to gain some favor with Odin who still appeared neutral.

They all looked at him with a new found respect.

"What do we do now?" Vakker asked.

"Well Beautiful," Loki said walking into the clearing. "I could explain the rules,"

_Right on time. Just as I was getting them on our side. _

2. Chapter 2

****Loki explains the rules and they witness their first fight of champions. Astrid and the gang wonder where Hiccup and Snotlout have gone.****

****Please review, share and enjoy! ****

* * *

><p>Chapter 2<p>

The Vikings stood and held their weapons. Vakker pointed her axe right at Loki.

"Step any further and I take your head," Vakker said.

"Easy there Love," Loki said. "You don't want to kill the god you came all this way to fight for,"

They began to lower their arms. "It's about time you got here," Hiccup said standing up.

"Oh, I'm sorry I was trying to give you time to make friends," Loki said sarcastically.

Hiccup rolled his eyes.

"Alright let's get down to business," Loki said. "Rules. They work like this. Thor's team will send out a champion into a neutral field. He will call out a name of a god on my team. The champion of that god will go and fight. If they win they call out the next champion. We win whoever it is won will return to this forest and wait until their next champion to challenge whichever one they want."

"How do we win?" Finkaren asked.

"Kill them," Loki said simply.

They all sat silently for a moment.

"Well," Loki said. "Just head down that path and you'll come to a field. Just wait there."

He disappeared.

"So who else is willing to kill for the gods?" Stolt asked.

No one answered.

"Yeah me neither," he said.

The group walked on the path that the god had pointed out. They didn't walk long until they came to the edge of the forest. Outside the tree line they saw an extensive field that held amazing beauty. The butterflies gracefully fluttered above the high grass and there was a gentle breeze and a bright sun.

Across the field they could see another forest.

Hiccup would bet that that was where Thor's team was.

He was right. It wasn't long until a man walked out. He was a large man with red hair and a long beard. The only weapon he carried was a massive sword. That thing was probably longer than Hiccup.

He walked right to the middle of the field. He stopped and stood proudly. With a smile on his face he called out toward their forest.

"I am the champion of Vali," the man said. "We challenge the champion of Nott,"

Their small group looked to Svartur. She looked paler than normal. Hiccup worried for her. That brute was huge.

"You don't have to go out there," Hiccup said. "You don't have to die for me,"

Svartur shook her head. "Nott chose me as her champion and she chose to support you. I won't disappoint her and I won't disappoint you," She began to walk out of the woods.

Hiccup grabbed her arm. "Svartur, you won't disappoint me,"

She turned with near tears in her eyes. "Hiccup, you had your chance to change from an outcast to hero. Give me the same chance,"

He let her arm go. How could he argue with that? She walked out of the woods with her head held high and her mace and shield ready.

"So they send a child," Vali's Champion said. "No matter. I have no qualms killing a child."

Hiccup desperately wanted to stand beside his friend.

Vali was the God of Vengeance. He was born out of the very idea of revenge. It made sense that his champion would be a ruthless asshole.

Svartur stopped a few yards away from Vali's champion. She put her shield in front of her and held her mace high over her head. With a viciously brave war cry she charged the massive man.

With Astrid

"So where's your boyfriend?" Ruffnut asked Astrid.

"I don't know. I haven't seen him all day." Astrid replied. "Where's yours?"

"Same." Ruffnut said.

Suddenly Tuffnut's head shot up from the table. "Wait," he said. "Snotlout _and_ Hiccup are missing?"

"Yeah," Astrid said. "What's wrong?"

"I always worried this day would come," he said. "Snot finally lost it and killed Hiccup for becoming more popular than him. He's probably dragging what remains of Hiccup into the woods to dump,"

There was a silence. Then Ruffnut promptly hit her brother in the back of the head. "You're such an idiot,"

"No you," he yelled back.

The two were about to start swinging when Astrid was able to stop them.

"While I really doubt that is what's going on," Astrid said. "We really should figure out where those two are,"

"Has anyone noticed how strange Hiccup has been acting since the Onska Quest?" Fishlegs asked.

Astrid was stunned. She thought she was the only one.

"What are you talking about Fish?" Tuffnut asked.

"He disappears sometimes," Fish said. "And sometimes he knows things that are going on miles away. He told me about how a lightning bolt

almost hitting Venn's ship while they were at sea. When I mentioned it to Venn she said she never told him about it."

"Well any of the other Barbarians could have told him," Tuffnut said.

"I guess," he said. "But he didn't spend a lot of time with any of the others."

"I'm sure someone told him," Tuffnut said refusing to believe anything weird was going on.

"I've noticed it too," Astrid said.

Tuffnut looked at her. "You've got to be kidding me. _You're_ gonna believe something weird is going on,"

"Really?" Astrid retorted. "Coming from Mr. Snot Murdered Hiccup,"

"Shut up," he said.

"Anyway," she continued. "Hiccup has been acting really strange. Sometimes when I ask him something I'll get some weird response or he'll avoid the question all together,"

"I'm sure it's nothing," Tuffnut insisted.

"Then why is he not here?" Astrid asked.

"I don't know," he replied. "Let's ask Stoick then,"

The table got silent. The only reason they would ever be able to even get close to the Chief was if they were with Hiccup or Snotlout. They were his family. Without them they had no connection to Stoick.

"So," Astrid said. "Who wants to volunteer?"

"Well, you're his girlfriend," Tuffnut said.

"It was your idea," Astrid replied.

They all began to argue about who would talk to Stoick.

Eventually the argument lost all logic and just became a test of will.

"I say Fishlegs does it," Ruffnut said.

"I say Tuffnut should," Astrid said.

"I say Astrid," Tuffnut said.

"I say not me," Fishlegs said.

"I say Fishlegs," Snotlout said.

"I sayâ€¦" Astrid stopped.

They all noticed Snot who had just begun yelling like they were.

"Do you even know what we're arguing about?" Ruffnut asked.

"Nope," Snotlout replied. "I just figured the wise thing to do was back my girlfriend."

"Wise choice indeed," she said. She walked over to him and greeted him with a kiss. "Where have you been all day?"

Snot became slightly uncomfortable. "I can't exactly talk about it," he said. "I just came down here to get some food,"

He departed and grabbed a quick bite to eat and left the Hall.

"If that doesn't say he killed Hiccup I don't know what does," Tuffnut said.

Ruffnut turned around and tackled him.

With Hiccup

Svartur swung her mace for the man's head. Vali's champion blocked it with his massive sword. Next she swung for his midsection and he blocked again.

She backed off. Now he swung for her. She dodged away from the overhead blow. Next he swung to decapitate her. She ducked.

Next he stabbed at her. Her shield absorbed the blow but it sent her back. The man was a power like no other.

He continued swinging for her. She dodged and on occasion blocked. They were both beginning to feel the fatigue of battle but only slightly.

The two warriors stepped away from one another. They breathed out and then again engaged in their fight.

Svartur swung at the man's foot andâ€¦

Finally! A connection. The blow wasn't as accurate as she had hoped but it hit his calf and slowed him down.

"You'll pay for that you bitch," the man growled.

She swung again for his head but again he blocked.

The man was still standing. She continued to attack him hoping he would lose his balance. Shockingly he didn't.

Svartur's arm began to bother her. Now the man was back on the offensive. His sword went for the girl.

She didn't have the energy to dodge his attacks. She had no choice but to block with her shield. Each time his sword smashed against her shield her arm grew weaker and she winced at the pain.

He swung his sword for her and she blocked with her shield. Her arm couldn't take it anymore. Her whole body twisted until she faced the

forest that she had come out of. As she turned she fell to her knees.

Hiccup watched in horror. _Come on. Get up._

Before Svartur could move Vali's champion stabbed his sword through the young girl's back. She began to gasp for breath. The pain was so immense. He continued driving the sword through her until his hilt touched her back.

Then with a sick smile he lifted her body off the ground causing even more pain to the dying girl. She winced but didn't cry out. She didn't have the breath to.

Even though Hiccup was shrouded in the density of the forest he felt that Svartur was staring right at him. Her eyes were welling with tears and not just from the pain of the sword. She had her chance to become a hero instead of a mistake and she was too weak.

Hiccup didn't think so. He thought she had fought bravely and that her dad would have been proud of her.

Vali's champion stood there for a moment to let the girl suffer. Then like he would toss away the bones of his dinner he waved his sword her lifeless body slid off and hit the ground with a thud.

Hiccup felt his own eyes becoming warm and water falling down his cheeks. He saw his friend lay there in the grass. He held onto the glimmer of hope that she had survived but he knew it was false hope.

Hiccup couldn't stop his feet. They seemed to move by themselves.

"Okay," Stolt said. "We should prepare for who they want to fightâ€¦ Hiccup where are you going?"

Hiccup's sadness had transformed itself. It had become searing hot anger. There in the grass lay his partner in suffering. The friend that had been tortured by words and fists alike for so many years now lay dead and this bastard was smiling.

Hiccup felt his hand reach for his sword. He would wipe that smile off his face.

He would make him regret that ruthless atrocity.

Hiccup stepped out of the woods. Almost immediately Svartur's body disappeared and the man's leg had healed. The man looked at his leg and smiled.

"So they send another child," he said.

Hiccup's look of disdain didn't falter. He drew his sword.

With Loki

Loki sat with the other gods in the Great Hall of Valhalla. In the fire pit they all watched the fight.

Nott winced when she saw her champion impaled and sneered when she saw Vali's smile.

Then Hiccup stepped out of the forest.

And the second he did Svartur appeared in front of Nott. She gasped for breath. "What happened?" she asked. "Did I die?"

"Technically yes," Nott said. "But you exist here only as consciousness. Therefore when you die you simply come back here,"

"The best part about that," Loki said. "Is that Hiccup's doesn't know that yet," He pointed to the fire. "I always knew having one of his friends killed would be something useful,"

Svartur saw the look in her friend's eyes. He had look of pure anger and hate and every bit of it was directed at the man who had killed her.

"What does he think he's doing?" Thor asked. "Vali's hero did not challenge anyone,"

"Well he does not appear to protest," Odin replied. Thor was not happy.

Nott waved her hand and chair appeared by her side. "Come," she said to her champion. "Sit and watch,"

Svartur did so. She couldn't help but think that if she did that poorly how bad would Hiccup do?

With Astrid

Astrid and the others had gone in search of Snotlout after they had separated the twins. Unfortunately they were quite far behind and didn't see where he went.

They had asked around the village for a bit. Finally they found out that most people saw him walking toward Hiccup's house.

This only helped to raise Tuffnut's suspicion.

They all decided that the best course of action would be to go to Hiccup's house and see why Snot was there. They saw the Haddock house. They walked up to the front door and knocked.

At first there was no response then they knocked again. With it becoming apparent to Snot that they weren't leaving he had no choice but to open the door.

"Hey Snot," Tuffnut said. "What are you doing here?"

"Oh you know," he said. "Just hanging out,"

"You don't even live here," he pointed out. "Can we talk to Hiccup?"

"No," Snot said quickly. "He's busy,"

Tuffnut raised an eyebrow. Astrid rolled her eyes and stepped up pushing Tuffnut aside before he could say something stupid. "Where is Hiccup?" Astrid asked. "We haven't seen him or you all day. We're just wondering what's going on,"

Snot stopped and thought about it for awhile. He resigned himself to it. "Only you," he said pointing to Astrid.

Snot turned and began walking towards Hiccup's room. Astrid didn't know what to do. She had such an ominous feeling. The others seemed kind of disgruntled that they didn't get to see what was going on.

Astrid followed Snot upstairs to Hiccup's room.

Snot turned to her before he entered the door. "You should probably prepare yourself. Just to tell you he's fine. Don't panic,"

Astrid felt even worse.

They entered the room and Astrid saw the unconscious Hiccup. She gasped slightly.

"He looks like he didâ€¦"

"After the battle." Snot finished her statement. "I know. He won't wake up. From what my uncle has told me the Elder says he'll be fine."

"Why won't he though?" Astrid said.

"I don't know," Snot said. "The Elder won't say,"

"It's so weird," Astrid said as she began walking over to Hiccup. She sat on the bedside and began stroking his hair. Snot felt awkward but he got it over it. "I can't even imagine how Toothless must feel." The dragon was lying on the floor near Hiccup's bed and staring intently at him.

He barely even acknowledged the other Vikings.

Astrid stood. "I don't know what to do," she said.

"Leave," Snot said. "I have to talk to Hiccup anyway so when he does wake up I can do that,"

Astrid raised an eyebrow.

"Better one of us stays cooped up in here than both of us," Snot said. Astrid nodded.

"Take care of him alright," Astrid said as she rose from the bed and began to walk out.

"Of course I will," Snot said. "He's my cousin,"

Astrid was going to make a comment but decided that Snot was too proud of that fact at the moment.

Astrid left. Although she worried she was somehow at ease at the idea

that Snot and Toothless were with him.

With Toothless

Toothless was so confused. There was no battle. There was no fight. Nor reason as to why Hiccup wouldn't wake up.

Toothless could hear him breath and watched his chest rise and fall. He knew his friend was still alive.

The large boy had stayed to watch over Hiccup. Toothless didn't care. He could protect Hiccup by himself. He didn't need him here.

Toothless always thought of Snotlout as loud, obnoxious and all in all a mean person. He didn't understand why he stayed to look after Hiccup.

He stopped thinking about it. It only added to his confusion.

Toothless decided that staying here the whole day would not help either of them so he decided he would go fishing. He was getting hungry. All he had to do was get Hiccup and | oh wait.

Hiccup was asleep.

No one else knew how to work his saddle. He could always use that gift Hiccup made for him.

But he couldn't put it on by himself. No thumbs or even the knowledge of how it worked.

Toothless got up and walked over to a trunk they had in the room and flipped the unlocked lid open. He dragged out the tail fin that allowed him to fly by himself.

He laid it on the ground in front of him. He stared at it intently for a little bit. He was deep in thought about how he would put this on his tail. He cocked his head as if maybe that would help him understand.

Snotlout let out a chuckle. Toothless turned and gave the boy a confused look. He didn't know what the Viking found so funny.

"Let me see that," he said walking over to the dragon. Snot grabbed the tail fin and looked it over. "Okay. This doesn't seem too hard,"

Snotlout attached the tail fin to the Night Fury.

"There ya go," Snotlout said.

Toothless looked at the boy strangely. He didn't think Snotlout was capable of kindness.

Toothless gave a small purr as gratitude and then went off to ease his growling stomach.

"Just for his sake I hope you wake up soon," Snotlout said to

himself.

3. Chapter 3

****Hiccup wants revenge for what he thinks happened to his friend. The gang thinks about what happened to Hiccup and how much he means to them all.****

****Please review, share, and enjoy!****

* * *

><p>Chapter 3<p>

Hiccup was a master tactician. He proved it when he killed a dragon that could ignite an entire fleet of ships on one breath.

This was no different.

Well there was a difference obviously. Hiccup didn't have Toothless. This man wasn't the size of a mountain.

The point is Hiccup had watched the way the man fought. The way he moved. He noticed by using the long sword the man liked keeping a range between him and his opponents. He would play his game for the moment. Hiccup had been thinking of ways to break his defenses and thought of only one way and that was not letting the man break his own.

Hiccup noticed that the man had not only healed but his sword was no longer bloody. He also seemed revitalized. It must be something about the environment.

Hiccup looked at the man. His eyes were still red from the tears he shed for his friend.

"Aw," the man said sarcastically. "Was that little witch your friend?"

"Don't you dare call her that!" Hiccup said threateningly pointing his sword at the man. The other heirs always accused her of being a witch. They taunted her with it. "She was a warrior and she was my friend. She was a far better person than you could ever hope to be you bastard."

The man's smile remained. "The key word in that is 'was',"

Hiccup just got angrier but just like when he was a kid he controlled himself. "You're going to die today," Hiccup said. "And it will be painful,"

"Then let's start already," the man said. He lunged for Hiccup swinging his sword over his head and bringing it down toward Hiccup.

Hiccup dodged effortlessly. He was always such a klutz. But for some strange reason when he had a sword in his hand he became a nimble warrior.

The man continued to swing for Hiccup. Each blow Hiccup dodged. His months of clinging to Toothless in the air had defined his legs' muscles.

They could handle the sudden weight changes and absorb the force of his constant movement. It also allowed Hiccup to continue to do so for a longer time.

It became apparent that Vali's champion was feeling the brunt of the battle. His movements became slower. His legs dragged slightly.

Hiccup was still agile and full of energy. He was still angry.

His own sword began to attack the man. Hiccup began with a light and slow attack for the man's neck. He blocked it easily.

But then with blinding speed drew his sword back and struck the man's leg. The same place Svartur had.

The man limped back but Hiccup wasn't finished.

Once again Hiccup attacked slowly and weakly. Aiming for random areas of his body. The man blocked them all but by moving his giant sword around so much he just continued to tire himself out.

Then as quickly as before he attacked the man's same leg but only a few inches away. He stabbed this time. His sword tore through flesh and muscle and the man howled in pain.

His leg was nearly useless now.

The man's eyes now held a rage of their own. And as he once again used more of the limited energy he had he swung from his right to his left to take Hiccup's head off.

Hiccup ducked and quickly stabbed the man in the right bicep. Another howl escaped the man. He was now in full retreat.

He limped backward trying to put space between himself and Hiccup. Hiccup's eyes now burnt like the fires of Muspell themselves. He wanted to smile with the pride he had of avenging Svartur's death but what was there to smile about? She was still dead.

"Get away from me!" the man yelled.

Hiccup continued to advance. The man swung his sword with his left hand hoping to stave off Hiccup's attack. Hiccup was able to parry it with his own sword. Then he jumped toward the man and drove his sword into the man's left wrist.

He dropped his huge sword. He continued to move back. Hiccup was tired of this coward's behavior. He sliced his sword into the man's other leg right at the knee.

He fell to his knees. Hiccup stabbed the man in the abdomen. Not deeply but enough to hurt. He repeated it until the man began to spit up his own blood.

The man looked at Hiccup. "Mercy," he pleaded.

"Where was Svartur's mercy?" Hiccup asked.

Hiccup raised his sword for the finishing blow. But then he stopped. He lowered his sword. Did he really want to stoop to this monster's level? Hiccup began to turn away. The man let out a sigh of relief.

Oh what the Hel?

Hiccup turned and kicked the man in the face. He felt his nose break from the force. The man fell back in shock. Hiccup stood over the man.

The man's blood poured out of his nose and mouth.

Hiccup artfully twisted his sword in his hand and then with deadly accuracy pierced the man's heart.

Hiccup withdrew his sword from the man's chest.

He took a step back to look at his work. The man died bloody and broken. He hoped that would be good enough for Svartur. She deserved to see this monster suffer. If only she could have seen.

Hiccup began walking back toward the woods. He reached and was greeted with amazed looks.

"Dear gods Boy," Finkaren said. "Remind me not get on your bad side,"

Vakker ran up and hugged Hiccup. "That was amazing" she said. "I'm so sorry for Svartur. You must have really loved her,"

"I did," Hiccup said. "She was a great friend,"

Vakker withdrew slightly. "You fought that passionately for a _friend_" she asked. "Odin's Beard how would you act if that was your girlfriend?"

"Please don't talk about that," Hiccup said politely.

Vakker nodded. This boy obviously held a lot of love in his heart. And it was that love that drove him to fight for whatever his cause was.

"I've got to hand it to you Hiccup," Stolt said. "I was afraid we were going to lose _two_ team members,"

"Yeah," Hiccup said. "Well I was angry,"

"Obviously," Stolt said. "I'm sorry for your loss,"

Hiccup nodded at the condolence. He walked away from the group and sat down. He leaned against a tree. He began to cry. The thought of Svartur's death began to truly sink in.

The group looked away. No one wants to be looked at during their weakest moments.

"Gotta say Haddock I didn't know you could get that mad," Loki said.

Hiccup looked up from his tears.

"Listen Pal," Stolt said stepping in between Hiccup and Loki. "Now isn't the time to harass him,"

Hiccup got up and put a hand on Stolt's shoulder. He nodded in gratitude for the defense.

Then without warning he drew his sword and pointed it at Loki's throat.

"You couldn't have just left me alone?" Hiccup screamed. "If you had just let Thor kill me then this stupid fight wouldn't have happened and Svartur would still be alive. I'd rather be dead than have someone die so senselessly because of me,"

Loki looked at his champion and broke out into laughter. Hiccup was mortified. He thought that he and Loki were becoming friends.

That hurt Hiccup. Losing one friend in one day was tough. Two thoughâ€|

"What are you laughing at?" Hiccup yelled.

"You thinkâ€|" Loki tried to say. "She'sâ€|deadâ€|" He just continued to laugh.

"Wait!" Hiccup said. "What?"

Loki recovered from his laughing fit. "You think I would drag you and a friend here and have you risk your lives?" Loki said. "You exist here as consciousness. In other words when you die you just go back to Valhalla."

Hiccup lowered his sword. "Soâ€|"

Loki raised an arm. Suddenly they were all standing in Valhalla. "Yes," Loki said.

"Holy crap!" Svartur yelled. "I didn't know you were such a good swordsman," Her hug felt more like an attack but he didn't care. He hugged her right back.

He hid his head in her hair. He had cried enough in front of these people. He didn't want them to see anymore.

"I thought you died," Hiccup said.

"Technically I did,"

"I know Loki explained," Hiccup said. "Would've been helpful before I charged out crying,"

"It seemed pretty heroic," Svartur said. "I didn't think you cared so much,"

"Of course I do," Hiccup said. "You've been my friend for so

long,"

Svartur smiled. Even as children Hiccup had a way of being comforting even in the worst circumstances.

"Well," Loki said. "As touching as this is, I would like an apology,"

Hiccup mentally kicked himself for letting his anger flare at Loki. He knew that Loki would do something like this. "I'm sorry," Hiccup said.

"It's alright," Loki said. "I should have told you guys that you're not in any real danger. But then again Hiccup wouldn't have had the same fire that he did when he fought that lummoxx,"

"By the way," Hiccup said. "Who are the other gods on Thor's team?"

"You might want to sit down because they each have a reason to hate you,"

A chair appeared and he sat down. Loki sat down as well.

"Well you've got Thor," Loki began. "You met Vali's champion. He was actually just kind of bored so he decided to take Thor's side. Then you have Ullr. You know the God of the Hunt. Yeah he's pissed because you claim to be a hero but you've never hunted. All heroes have hunted in the past,"

"First of all," Hiccup said. "I didn't claim anything. You were the one who picked me to be a hero,"

"He doesn't understand that," Loki said. "Anyway, you also have Tyr. Yeah, I know I was pretty shocked too. I thought he would like you," Loki said pointing to his leg.

Tyr was the God of War and a great hero to the other gods. He sacrificed (and by sacrificed he literally sat through the painful process of letting a giant wolf eat it) his hand to a mighty wolf by the name of Fenrir. One of Loki's children. So he in a way was similar to Hiccup. They both lost a part of their body to save the people they love.

"But I guess he's still angry about what my son did," Loki shrugged. The very thought of knowing that Loki had children made Hiccup shudder. "Oh and Var," Loki said.

Hiccup thought it over for a second. "Oh crap," he said with realization.

Var was the Goddess of Oaths and Agreements. Hiccup had an oath. An oath that he had forsaken. Yeah, he could imagine why she would be mad.

"Yeah," Loki said. "She hates you pretty adamantly. She probably wouldn't have you prayed for her forgiveness for breaking that oath of yours. But she doesn't voice it as much. She just sneers when your name is brought up. And she said she wants to watch her champion make you suffer,"

"Thank you for summing that up," Hiccup said.

"It's what I'm here for," Loki said. "So how would you like to meet the other gods on your side?"

Hiccup shrugged. He, Loki and Svartur made their way over to where the other champions had gathered and had begun meeting their respective gods.

Hiccup recognized Heimdall and Nott. The other two were new. There was beautiful woman. A beauty Hiccup didn't think could exist. She had blond hair and blue eyes like most people in the Scandinavian part of the world. Hiccup couldn't really think of words to describe her. Nor could he think of the details of her face or body. It all just blended into a pleasing image.

She must be Lofn.

The other unfamiliar face belonged to an older and wrinkled man. He was thinish and tall. His very presence gave off a smell of salt. His brown hair and short beard gave away the fact that he didn't find grooming as important as the other gods. Not to the point where he appeared unkempt or dirty. It made him seem a bit more approachable.

Hiccup assumed this to be Njord.

"So this is the mighty Hiccup?" Lofn said. "It's very nice to meet you,"

Hiccup as well as the other men became weak at the knee at the sound of her voice.

"I-It's nice to meet you too," Hiccup said trying to appear as unphased as possible. It was a failure. Lofn giggled and the men nearly turned to puddles.

"You should probably stop talking Lofn," Njord said. "Before these men pass out," Njord then walked toward Hiccup. He extended his hand. "It's such a pleasure to meet you Hiccup," Njord said. This was the most polite introduction any god had ever given Hiccup. Hiccup was happy about this. He took the hand.

Njord felt like he possessed the power of the Ocean itself. Well he did.

Njord seemed genuinely happy to just meet Hiccup. "I have to admit," He said. "I'm a big fan,"

"I've noticed," Hiccup said. "Thank you and all. But, why?"

"Well," Njord said. "I didn't really care much when you killed the Red Death. But after you got rid of those pesky Sea Serpents I began to like you a whole lot more,"

Hiccup had never thought of that.

"All you have to do now," Njord said. "Is kill Jormungandr and I'll reserve a seat for you in this very Hall,"

"Alright," Loki said. "Let's not give him ideas," Loki said it as a joke but there was a _very _slight hint of worry in his voice. Not for Hiccup. But for Jormungandr. After all the sea serpent was his son.

"We should probably start getting to our seats," Heimdall said.

The gods agreed and the group made their way to their seats. It wasn't like any of the Great Halls back home. No this was so much moreâ€¦ elegant. There were no tables. Well there was one. One long table that seemed to wrap around the Hall.

Loki and the members of his team had seats close to Odin that were opposite Thor's. Hiccup could finally see the gods that stood against him.

He had heard so much of Thor and now he was only a few feet away. He had long blonde hair that was unknotted and he had no beard. He seemed to radiate lightning. Along with pride, power and at the moment anger. The boy that he was so desperately trying to kill had been the one to come out with a victory today.

Next to Thor was an equally displeased man. He must be Vali because his champion was sitting right next to him. He had black hair and surprisingly it was quite short. He appeared young and also had no beard but he was considerably smaller than Thor.

Next to him was a man with a bow on his back. Well two men. Ullr no doubt and his champion. Ullr seemed to be at ease. He cast a few unhappy glances toward Hiccup but nothing unbearable. He had brown hair and mid size beard. He had the keen eye of a hunter and so did his champion. He seemed larger than Vali but not Thor.

Next was Tyr. Surprisingly he didn't take a seat closer to Thor. He had rights over Ullr and Vali but he decided not to. Tyr sat at the table with his missing hand in plain sight. Not in a way to show off but in a way that he didn't care what people saw. He didn't seem like the petty type of man who would hold a grudge for it, giving Hiccup reason to believe that there was another reason Tyr didn't like him.

Finally came Var. She dressed in a way that made her look important. Not that every god didn't already. She gave off a sense of judgment. She had an idea of what was right and what was wrong and felt that Hiccup had done wrong.

Now Hiccup took the time to look at the champions.

Thor's champion wasâ€¦

No way.

Beside Thor sat a boy Hiccup knew well. Adla was the son of Chief Klokt of the Vordad Tribe. He wasn't Hiccup's friend but he was no enemy either. During conferences Adla wouldn't pick on Hiccup or Svartur on occasion he would even _talk_ to them. On top of being an amazingly nice person Adla was a renowned warrior and a well liked Viking. Even non-heirs knew of him. He was tall and had long blonde hair with green eyes. He was made of nearly all muscle.

Hiccup found himself looking slack jawed at the fellow heir. Hiccup turned to Svartur who was a few spaces away from him. She had the same look of shock. She returned Hiccup's look. Now Adla noticed their looks. He turned to them both and winked with a slightly mischievous smile.

Hiccup gulped. He knew how deadly Adla was. Plus he had already seen them both fight.

Hiccup moved on. He already saw Vali's champion so it was onto Ullr's. Ullr's champion seemed only a bit shorter than his god. He looked pretty similar to Ullr except for his clothes and more youthful appearance.

Tyr's champion was a large man with blonde hair and long beard. He radiated the feeling of battle. He had obviously seen many in his day. His eyes, while piercing, also held the love of a father. Hiccup didn't know how he knew but he just did.

Var's champion was a woman with red hair. She had a spear leaning against her chair. She didn't seem like an angry person but she was a person who would certainly kill if she was made angry.

So all in all Hiccup thought that this would be a pretty even match up.

After he had sized up his opponents dinner was put out. The gods and their champions began to dig in.

The food tasted amazing. It was like it was meant for the well gods. Loki sat to Hiccup's right and Nott to his left. He talked to the gods. When it came to Loki Hiccup was nonchalant and comfortable. When it was Nott Hiccup was formal and polite. He didn't want to offend her in anyway.

He needed all the friends he could get. And he wasn't sure how Nott felt about the whole mortal talking to her thing.

"We welcome the champions of Midgard today," A tall man with an eye patch said. "May they fight vigorously and with honor," the man raised his cup and all the others followed suit.

"Is that?" Hiccup started to ask Loki.

"Yep," Loki said. "That's Dad,"

With Astrid

Her day was so boring. Hiccup was in that constant sleep of his and she was left with nothing to do. Usually she could kill some time by hanging out with him. What made it worse is that Hiccup had just gotten freed of his Chiefly duties and now he was in some coma.

Astrid went to the arena and practiced her small axe throwing. Then she began using her axe's launching system.

She didn't think she'd ever understand how Hiccup knew how to do all these things. All of his inventions were beyond his time and even

beyond the Romans. And Astrid had heard stories of their strange devices.

Astrid was now longing to ask Hiccup how he made her axe. She didn't care how boring the details would be. She really just wanted to talk to him again. She wouldn't mind if he was busy or something. If he was she would just interrupt him. But knowing she couldn't just talk to him made her want to even more.

With Tuffnut

Tuffnut was never particularly close with Hiccup but at the moment he missed him. He had no idea where the little freak went but he desperately just wanted to talk to him.

After all the two did share a smartass sense of humor. Plus he wanted to learn more about Venn that way when he did see her again he would have more to talk about.

Also he wanted to ask Hiccup why his Zippleback has been shedding so much lately.

He really wanted to know what the hell happened to his friend.

That was still a strange concept. Hiccup was his friend now. They had seen battle together. He was dating his cousin. Other than those two things they just got along now.

Fourteen years of torture and harassment and poof they were friends. Hard to believe.

With Ruffnut

Ruffnut had only felt attraction to Hiccup once and that was before the battle with the Red Death. Just because she thought she had a touch of insanity in that head of his. But, she soon found out that he thought too much. Crazy wasn't the complete absence of thought but there isn't a lot of it.

But she still liked him. It wasn't just the fact that he was cool for saving them all and killing the massive dragon and bringing an end to the war and teaching them to ride dragons.

Where was this going?

Right. He was just a good friend. All the other things had just given them all reason to hang out with him and give him a chance.

And Ruffnut was happy about it. Now that Hiccup had become a part of their group everyone seemed happier. Not just with him but in general. Her friends were always in such a better mood than they used to be.

Ruffnut occasionally regretted her own treatment of Hiccup, but she was able to tell herself that apologizing was just a form of weakness. But now with Hiccup nowhere to be found she was worrying that she would be unable to tell him that she truly was sorry for the past and looked forward to the future.

With Fishlegs

Hiccup and Fishlegs weren't ever really friends. Fishlegs was able to keep his own. While he was an outcast in his own right Fish never suffered the same as Hiccup.

Fish was now hoping to see Hiccup soon. They had become very good friends recently. Fish finally found someone who shared his hunger for knowledge. Hiccup was just as interested in dragons and he was.

If not more.

Fishlegs was really worried. He had no idea what had happened to Hiccup. He just hoped that he was alright. Mostly out of fear that without Hiccup everything could fall apart. Without Hiccup the Vikings would lose their greatest dragon trainer. Without him there was little chance they could continue their success at training the animals.

Fish worried about everything and now he had one more.

4. Chapter 4

****A new arrival in Valhalla leads to new tension. This chapter focuses on Loki in a different perspective than normal. As a father. This is also gonna be pretty good crash course in Norse Mythology for those of you who are unfamiliar. Hiccup meets with Odin and then with an old acquaintance. Astrid and Snotlout have to go to bed at night not knowing what is going on with Hiccup.****

****I try to get back to all reviews so please check your PM's.****

****Please review, share and enjoy! ****

*** * ***

><p>Chapter 4<p>

Hiccup went through dinner silent as he enjoyed the amazing food. He couldn't help but cast glances Odin's way every once and awhile. He did the same to Adla.

Odin seemed to be uninterested in the champions. He spoke to the gods around him and on occasion that included Loki. And Hiccup was shocked to see that Loki would act respectful. He laughed at everything Odin said. Hiccup recognized the action. He had done it when he had asked permission to go on what had been promptly named the Onska Quest.

Hiccup and Svartur would on occasion speak. But they maintained an awed silence for most of the meal.

Odin rose to speak to everyone. "The champions are invited to spend the night in the cabin near the Bilfrost Bridge. It has been built for this occasion. Please do not kill each other. While you will simply return here, I really do not want mortals aimlessly wandering through Valhalla."

Hiccup was kind of shocked. He didn't think they would put them together. There was almost sure to be violence. The more proud members of both sides were probably going to kill each other.

Heimdall suddenly became very tense. Almost everyone noticed it. Hiccup thought there was only one reason that Heimdall would become anxious like this. There must be someone on the Bifrost Bridge.

Hiccup's worries were realized when an extremely skinny but tall woman walked through the doors. Her hair was long, black, and unkempt but she maintained a strange sense of beauty. She was very pale.

Every god seemed astonished at the woman's arrival.

"What are you doing here?" Odin asked in the most polite way he could manage.

"I cannot enjoy a battle of champions?" the woman retorted.

"This is something between the _gods_," Thor said in his usual superior tone.

"I may not be a god but I have rights here," the woman said. She turned to Loki. "Isn't that right Father?"

Hiccup looked at Loki and that back to the woman.

Loki's brood. Three children of Loki. Fenrir the wolf, Jormungandr the serpent and Hel the woman made Queen of the Dead. All three played a role in Ragnarok. Hel now stood here before Hiccup.

"You think because you're Loki's kid you can just barge into Valhalla?" Thor said outraged. "Go back to your dark pit,"

The woman looked displeased. She then looked in a pleading way toward her father. Loki was trapped.

"You may stay only if Loki agrees," Odin said.

Thor could not believe how kind his father was being to Loki lately. Loki sat there stunned. Hel never came to visit and he never went to Hel to visit Hel. Confusing right?

Yes Hel is the land of the dead and the Queen of Dead.

Hiccup couldn't give any advice or help on the subject. It was all on Loki.

Loki finally managed to make a decision. "You can stay," Loki said. There was an immediate response from Thor's side and several other gods.

Odin silenced them. "Loki you understand that you will be completely responsible for her while she is here?"

"Yes," Loki said. "I will be with her the whole time," The woman

seemed to brighten considerably at the comment.

"And that's supposed to make us feel better," Thor said sarcastically.

Loki laughed at the joke. "I would hope it would,"

Thor just got angrier. Loki was impossible to understand. He couldn't be insulted. He owned his story.

"Well," Odin said. "This certainly was a nice dinner but it has come to an end. You may all leave. Except Hiccup. I would like to talk to you,"

Hiccup's heart skipped a beat. All the champions looked at Hiccup. The King of the Gods wanted him to stay after and talk to him.

All the gods and champions left. Hiccup was left alone in the hall with Odin.

Hiccup gulped. Odin made a motion for Hiccup to come toward him. Hiccup stood and walked over with shaking knees to the King of Gods.

"You know why you're here in Asgard correct?" Odin asked.

"Yes," Hiccup said nervously. "To fight for Loki,"

"Well there's that," Odin said. "But you know why Thor challenged Loki? Because he wants to gain favor with me. Enough so that he can convince me to lift your champion status so he can kill you."

"Well that's inspiring," Hiccup said.

Odin chuckled. "Don't worry," Odin said. "There's a reason I won't." Hiccup looked confused. "I have lived for centuries. And I have always been fascinated by you humans. You don't live long but through every moment you all try to find beauty and happiness. At least most of you do. And secretly I have envied that. Any moment could send you here or to Hel. And yet that is the reason that through your eyes there exists beauty that the gods cannot comprehend. And Hiccup you have exemplified that for me. You have reminded me of the human ambition that is so unbreakable. You are destined for greatness Hiccup. One day my son will realize that. Hopefully it will be within the week."

Hiccup stood in an awed silence. Here was the King of Gods saying that he envied humanity. And that Hiccup was meant for great things. He didn't know what to say.

"I can't imagine how this might feel to you," Odin said. "So I'm going to let you leave. I simply wanted you to be at ease."

Hiccup turned and gave as a polite goodbye as he could. He was far from "at ease".

With Loki

"What are you really doing here?" Loki asked Hel.

"I thought you would be happy to see me," Hel said. There was no sarcasm. She was truly hurt.

"That's not what I'm saying," Loki continued. "I'm asking you why you're here,"

"To watch the fights," she said.

"You're lying to me Hel," Loki said.

"Fine," she said defeated. She knew there was no point lying to the god of tricks. "This Hiccup kid," she said. "I came to watch him. He'sâ€¦ special."

"How so?" Loki said.

"He escaped me," she said. "He somehow got away from certain death. If he is able to stay away from me when he's that close he must be some form of special."

"So what," Loki said. "You want him to die?"

"No," she said. "I just want to ask him how he did it,"

"Oh dear us," Loki said. "You're serious. That's what you came here for? Are you stupid? If Heimdall saw you as a threat he could have killed you on the spot! Don't forget that we are still very distrusted here. The next time you walk across that bridge Heimdall might be there and he won't hesitate next time."

"The next time I walk across that bridge I will have an army," Hel said.

Loki nearly smacked her for saying something like that in Asgard. "You really are the stupidest of my children," Loki said. "Do not speak like that here,"

"Have you forgotten Father?" Hel said. "You're going to be the one leading that army. You, me and my brothers will march and we willâ€¦"

"Die," Loki said. "You will die and so will Fenrir and Jormungandr. And so will I. There is no winner in Ragnarok."

"Then you've given up?" She asked. "Since you were freed from that stone you haven't done anything but sit here with your enemies and gotten all chummy. Fenrir is still chained up. The gods have never let me visit him. I can't even find Jormungandr. And now I come to you and you're not even willing to fight."

"I don't want any of you to die," Loki said. "They took you all from me when you were children and I don't even want to imagine how difficult life was for you particularly. But things have changed. Hiccup may have caused a disruption that may prevent Ragnarok. Heimdall and Iâ€¦"

"Oh now you and Heimdall are friends,"

"Associates," Loki said.

"That's better?" Hel said.

"Just listen," Loki commanded. "I know I haven't spoken to you or your brothers in a long time but only because I'm working on a way that you don't have to die. If the other gods saw me speaking with any of you they would become suspicious. It was wrong what they did to you and I understand you want revenge. A child shouldn't have to pay for the sins of a father. But please try and keep calm. I will try to negotiate the freeing of Fenrir and you try and find Jormungandr."

"I already have," Hel said. "I think he's hiding. He has been since that Hiccup boy killed the Dragon Queen. Not that he was easy to find before that either."

"I know," Loki said. He walked up to his daughter and youngest child. He laid his hand on her shoulders. "Just try. He's around there somewhere."

"So I guess you want me to start that now?" she said disappointed.

Loki smiled. "No," he said. "Right now I want you to stay here and sit with me during the fights,"

It was like Hel was a young girl again. She was so happy at the idea of just being able to spend some time with her father. She had been robbed of that opportunity as a child. With a smile that was so rare for her she went away to bed.

"Geez," Loki said.

"Harder than it looks, isn't it Boy?" Odin said.

Loki turned to see his father walking up to him. "What do you mean Old Man?" Loki asked.

"Parenting," He said. "It's a lot harder than it seems,"

"Oh because you made it look so easy," Loki said sarcastically.

"It's not like you were an easy kid to deal with," Odin said. "I know that sometimes I may have handled situations between you and Thor differently. But you did try to overthrow me Loki."

"Ah, Family memories," Loki said. "Nothing makes me sicker,"

"Your memories may not be all that great but there's always the future," Odin said.

"So I'm guessing you've heard about the plan to avoid Ragnarok," Loki said.

"Heard about?" Odin said. "Try thought about. I thought this kid would be something special after he killed that beast. And yes I did hear some of that conversation you just had with Hel."

"What part specifically?" Loki asked.

"Fenrir," Odin said. "I'm not freeing him. At least not yet." Odin said. Fenrir was meant to kill Odin in Ragnarok.

"Then can I at least take that sword out of his mouth?" Loki said. "Grant me that please. My kids probably don't have much love for me. But I think that can change if I can explain my plan to them,"

"I'll allow it," Odin said. "But don't make any moves to free him. In fact I'm sending Heimdall with you. Since you two are such good friends now." Odin said jokingly.

Loki made a fake laughing face. "So funny," he said. "Now all I have to do is find Jormungandr."

"He may be big but he's not easy to find,"

"I know," Loki said. "But maybe I wouldn't have to search for him if you and the other gods didn't take them from me,"

Odin seemed slightly hurt by the comment.

The story went that after hearing of the destructive power of Loki's children the gods became worried. So they went and stole the children from their home with their mother. A hideous giantess named Angrboda. They kept Fenrir the oldest in Asgard to watch. They cast Jormungandr into the ocean in Midgard. He ate and became the largest creature in the world. And Hel was sent to Niflheim where she had to fight to become ruler.

"Fenrir is still in much pain and Hel had an unimaginable childhood," Loki said reminding his father of the crime. "Jormungandr is the only one who came out of this a winner,"

"I will not apologize for protecting myself and the ones I love," Odin said.

"Of course not," Loki said. "I would never expect any apology from you,"

Loki walked away to his own home in Asgard.

With Hiccup

Hiccup approached the large cabin close to the Bifrost Bridge. He was still shaken by his meeting with Odin. But now he had to focus on not being killed by his "enemies".

He entered the cabin as a chair smashed against the wall next to the door. _And I here I thought they wouldn't start without me._

Stolt and Tyr's champion looked about ready to kill each other. Obviously one of them had thrown the chair.

"Good evening," Hiccup said. All eyes fell on him. He shrunk slightly. "Maybe you guys could save it for the field," People looked at him with disdain.

"He's right," Adla said. "As Thor's champion I have command of Thor's team and likewise with Hiccup. We will kill each other on the battlefield," There was an uneasy peace but a peace nonetheless.

It was so obvious Adla was from the Vordad.

The adults all began talking in smaller groups. Hiccup, Svartur and Adla formed their own small group.

"So Loki and Nott," Adla said. "You two sure have come far,"

"You're one to talk Adla," Svartur said. "You have Thor on your side,"

"Well yeah," Adla said. "But I didn't slay any giant dragon," Hiccup felt a little uneasy. "Come on Kid," Adla insisted. "I heard about the huge fight and the peace you made with the dragons. I also heard you ride the Night Fury. Usually I don't believe rumors but this one was just so unlikely that it had to be true."

"Oh thanks Adla," Hiccup said sarcastically. "It's so hard to believe I could be the Queen of Dragons?"

"It's hard to believe you could kill a Terrible Terror," Adla said in a joking way. "I also heard you lost a leg,"

"I did," Hiccup said. "I think it's this whole Asgard thing,"

"Ah," Adla said. "Well, I bet you're real popular now,"

"Well yeah," Hiccup said.

"I'm also going to assume your parents told you about our little event in Trenk," Adla said suddenly becoming serious.

"Yeah," Svartur said. "Hiccup's going to teach all of the teens to ride dragons,"

"First he has to prove that he can," Adla said.

"I haven't met a dragon I can't train," Hiccup said with a slight sense of boldness in his voice.

"What about the one you killed?" Adla asked.

"That doesn't count," Hiccup said.

"I think it would beg to differ," Adla said.

"Well it can't beg anything," Hiccup said. "Because it's dead,"

Adla and Svartur began laughing.

"I wish you both luck," Adla said. "You're going to need it after what I've seen today,"

"Shut up," Svartur said knowing the comment was about her.

"Relax Svartur," Adla said.

"I'm not going to relax," Svartur returned. "He got lucky,"

"Svartur your back was to him and you were on your knees from

exhaustion," Adla said. "He had you beaten,"

"We'll just see," Svartur said. "I vow to kill any champion you guys send out against me from now on,"

"That's the spirit," Adla said.

Svartur and Hiccup both looked confused. Then they realized. Adla had only said it to make Svartur angry enough to keep her spirits up. As confusing as it sounds Adla knew it would work. Now they had a competition.

With Astrid

This would be the first night in awhile that Astrid would go home to go to bed without seeing Hiccup once. Back when they were kids she might not have cared whether or not she saw him.

Back then he might as well have been a twig on a rock. She didn't care for him.

Now he was all that mattered to her.

The idea of going to bed without so much as talking to him ate at her. She had trouble sleeping that night. She hadn't had this trouble sleeping since the Battle of the Red Death. When Hiccup had woken for days.

Now she had to deal with it a second time. Knowing Hiccup's crazy recklessness who knew if this would be the last time he was in a strange coma?

Is this what being married to him is going to be like?

Wait! What did she just think?

Astrid forced the thought out of her head. She was still fifteen and so was he. Well he wouldn't be for much longer but marriage was still such an adult concept.

Astrid tried to force the idea to suffer by replacing Hiccup in her mind with Snotlout, Tuffnut, and Fishlegs. Even a few of the teens she had seen once or twice from gatherings and such. But each time it ended the same way.

She could only picture herself with Hiccup.

Astrid finally got tired and drifted off to sleep with a smile upon her face.

With Snotlout

Snot sat in a chair in Hiccup's room. He should probably head home soon.

Snot had spent the whole day waiting. Waiting for something to change. Maybe it was Viking stubbornness to do something that he said he would do that made him stay.

Now he thought. Something rare for Snotlout.

He thought about what he had done to Hiccup. He thought back to one particular instance.

Snotlout and Hiccup were about eight or nine. Snotlout was resting in the valley after a day in combat training. He watched as the clouds went by and which ones looked like weapons or dragons.

Hiccup had just gotten done with his own form of training in the forge.

Hiccup was walking to his house. He had some idea for an invention to make dragon slaying easier. Snotlout saw an opportunity.

He remembered getting up from his prone position and walking toward his cousin.

"Hey there Hiccup," Snot said.

"What do you want?" Hiccup asked immediately on guard.

"Hiccup?" Snot said. "What makes you think I want anything more than to say hello to my cousin?"

"Cause it's you," Hiccup said.

"That hurts Hiccup," Snot said. "I think you might have to make you feel the same way,"

Hiccup understood the threat. He tried to run but Snot had gotten too close. He lunged for his cousin. He grabbed Hiccup and threw him to the ground with one arm. Hiccup tried to return to his feet but was met with a sharp blow to the stomach.

It knocked the air clean out of him.

He lied on the ground gasping for breath. Snotlout kicked him while he was on the ground several times.

"Never show mercy in a fight," Snotlout said. "You'd learn this if you actually came to training,"

"Weâ€| weren't fightingâ€|" Hiccup got out.

Snot quickly kicked him again. "You offended me. I have to reclaim my honor."

Snot dragged Hiccup to his feet. He pulled him farther from the village. Hiccup tried his hardest to escape but Snot's iron grip was too strong.

When Snot was content that they were far enough without warning turned and punched Hiccup in the face. Hiccup fell.

Snotlout dragged him to his feet again. He backed him into a tree and continued to hit Hiccup.

Hiccup put his hands up to guard his head. It didn't matter. Snot had plenty of other places to whale on. Snot continued the beating until he was satisfied that he had taught his cousin whatever he was

attempting to teach him.

Hiccup slid down the tree until, he was seated and leaning against it. "You're pathetic," Snot said and walked away.

Hiccup wasn't able to walk back to town right away. He sat there covered in his own blood. He was cut up on his face. His midsection was bruised and he was almost certain he have had a broken rib. Possibly other broken or sprained bones.

He just sat there. He didn't regain the strength to return until dinner. When he made it to the Great Hall he was a sight to behold. Most of his wounds had closed and he was covered in dry blood.

His father was worried and asked him what had happened. Snotlout remembered the fear he felt that Hiccup would tell his dad what had happened.

Snot saw the look on Hiccup's face when he saw Snotlout. He had the chance to bury Snotlout. Hiccup saw the look of terror on his cousin's face. So he turned back to his father and did the only thing his conscience would allow him to.

"I fell while I was climbing Raven Point," Hiccup said. It was known for its jagged edges.

Hiccup was scolded for his daring stupidity.

Snot used to look back on that day with pride. But now all he felt was shame and regret.

Snot had had plenty of broken bones, bruises and all sorts of other injuries. When he stepped out of line his father would give him an appropriate punch or full beating. Not like he gave Hiccup mind you, but nonetheless.

Yet after all that Snot had let out tears very rarely. He gritted his teeth and he went along. But now he found himself allowing a drop of water to slide down his cheek. There was no injury now. There was no wound.

Snot looked at his cousin.

"This is your fault," he said. "If you would just wake up I could just apologize and stop remembering,"

Hiccup didn't respond.

"Damn it," Snot said standing up. He began pacing. "Now I'm talking to myself,"

Toothless cast a curious look at the large boy. He was wondering why this one of all Hiccup's friends had stayed. From what Toothless knew the two had never had a very good relationship.

"This is probably some sort of punishment," Snot said. "I'm going to have to think of every bad thing I've ever done to you. It has to be some divine intervention."

Snot had no idea how right he was.

Snot finally resigned himself to the fact that Hiccup would not be waking any time soon. So he turned to the door and exited the room. He looked back at Hiccup.

"Wake up soon," Snot said softly. He said it to his cousin and to his friend.

5. Chapter 5

****The second day in Valhalla begins. The second fight. ****

****Just to quickly address a point brought up by a reviewer. There are some gaps in the mythonlogy and I'm aware. Loki is not a god in traditional mythology. But, I changed some of the mythology for the story's sake.****

****Please review, share, and enjoy! ****

* * *

><p>Chapter 5<p>

Hiccup woke up in his bed in the cabin for champions.

He got up and reached for his leg. Oh wait!

Hiccup looked at his leg and remembered that it was back. He swung his legs over the side and stepped out of bed. He looked around to see that the other men in the room had begun waking as well.

They had a men's barracks and a women's barracks.

"Ready to lose?" Adla asked Hiccup in friendly competition.

"No," Hiccup said. "Are you?"

"I'm feeling a victory today," Adla said.

"Feelings have a way of being wrong," Hiccup said. The two boys smiled. This was still weird to them. They were never really friends but they didn't hate each other.

They went into the common room of the cabin and found Svartur looking tired and angry.

"Morning person?" Hiccup said to Svartur.

She almost decked him. "I spent the whole night keeping Vakker and Lofa from killing each other. I'm exhausted."

"And Lofa isâ€|?" Hiccup asked.

"Var's champion," Adla answered.

"Oh," Hiccup said.

"Please tell me you guys had the same problem," Svartur said.

Adla and Hiccup looked at each other. Then looked at Svartur. "Oh yeah," Hiccup said. "Absolutely," Adla said simultaneously.

Behind them Stolt came out with his arm over the shoulder of Vali's champion as they laughed together. "You're too funny!"

Svartur looked shocked. "Stolt!" she yelled.

He looked to Svartur. He saw the problem. "I meanâ€¦" Stolt backed away and punched Vali's champion in the face. Vali's man fell to the ground. He looked up stunned. Stolt mouthed the word: "Sorry," then walked away.

"Same problem, huh?" Svatur asked the boys.

Hiccup looked away and began whistling. Adla almost burst out laughing at the turn of events.

"You guys suck," Svartur said as she herself began smiling. The trio found some sofas and sat down to talk for awhile.

"So what are you guys doing before the Youth Gathering?" Svartur said.

"Well I have to help prepare for it," Adla said.

"I'm trying to start training the guys at Valden," Hiccup said. "Venn just got done with a visit to Berk,"

"Oh how's she doing?" Svartur asked.

"She's good," Hiccup said.

"Any way you could drop by me?" Svartur nearly whispered.

Hiccup stopped. He realized that her life hadn't changed since he killed the Red Death. She was still an outcast. She still lacked the friends that Hiccup now had.

"Of course I could," Hiccup said. "I'm sure dropping by would be no problem,"

Svartur allowed a small smile to show. But she maintained a sort of uncaring look, just for her pride's sake.

"So how's life in Berk now?" Adla asked. "That Astrid girl still around?"

Hiccup awkwardly grabbed his neck. "Wellâ€¦ she's still there," Hiccup said.

Adla's jaw dropped. "No," Adla said. Hiccup nodded. "Dear gods, Hiccup. That's what I'm talking about!"

Svartur just shook her head.

"Attention champions," a voice from the center of the room. All the heroes looked in its direction and found Thor standing there. "Meet in Valhalla in ten minutes to get ready for the next day of fighting,"

Thor disappeared.

"A please would be nice," Hiccup said.

Some of the champions on Thor's side looked at Hiccup bitterly. They apparently didn't enjoy his humor.

The teams got their stuff together and began heading over to Valhalla.

They made it there in no time. There was no cripple slowing them down. Hiccup still found it strange looking down and seeing both of his legs. He had just gotten used to the fact that he didn't have it. And now it was back and he knew that when he returned to Midgard he would have to re-readjust.

Hiccup didn't want to think about that. Hiccup just enjoyed the sensation of being able to move all ten of his toes.

Hiccup and the others arrived at Valhalla and found their seats near their gods. Loki gave his usual overzealous greeting. Hiccup sat and looked around. Hel was nowhere to be found.

Hiccup whispered to Loki. "Where's your daughter?"

"Good question," Loki replied.

"Aren't you supposed to be looking after her?" Hiccup asked in worry.

"She's a grown giant," Loki said.

"That being the main problem," Hiccup said.

"I'm sure there's nothing to worry about," Loki said. "So how bout you calm down?"

"Calm down?" Hiccup asked. "If this part of some stupid plan you have for Ragnarok can you at least let me leave? Cause this isn't the ideal place to be for that,"

"Will you relax?" Loki insisted. The massive doors to the Hall opened. "That's probably her now,"

In the door was a small girl. She wore all black and was very pale and very skinny. Her hair was long and

Oh dear gods that's Hel!

"Hel?" Loki asked in equal astonishment.

The young girl skipped over to Loki holding some mutilated looking doll. She seemed to be humming while she skipped. All the gods and champions returned to their silence of her last entrance. She certainly had her father's ability in the shock factor department.

"Yep," the girl said to her father's question.

"What areâ€|?" Loki said. "Why did youâ€|? What the You is going on here?" He finally said.

The girl seemed to deflate. "You don't like seeing me like this, do you?"

Loki stopped himself. He couldn't believe what he was looking at. His daughter had assumed this form of a small child. He couldn't think of a reason why she did. He chose his next words carefully. He didn't want to upset her. She was still his daughter.

"It's not that. It's justâ€| you don't normally look like this. Why did you take this form?"

The small girl shrugged.

Loki could tell that the shrug was a lie. She knew damn well why she was doing this.

"Are we ready to continue?" Odin said.

Loki regained his composure. He and Thor said in unison:
"Yes!"

"Good," Odin said. "Then today will work the same way as yesterday," Odin waved his hands and all the champions disappeared. All the gods turned their attention away from Hel and Loki.

Loki pointed to the seat where Hiccup had been sitting. "Care to take a seat?"

The girl shrugged again. She skipped the distance to the chair next to Loki. But she didn't sit in the chair. She went over to Loki and sat on his lap.

Loki couldn't even protest. He knew how bad it would look. If he kept his mouth shut the other gods might not notice.

"Who's Hiccup fighting today Daddy?" Hel asked with an unusual brightness in her eye.

"Why?" Loki asked in a low voice.

Hel knew what he was asking. "I don't know I just felt like it," she said. She looked away from her father. "Looking like this wasn't exactly an easy thing to do when I first arrived. I figured now would be a good time to at least _try_ to be kid."

Loki hurt inside. He hurt for his child. "So be it," Loki said. "Next time give me some sort of heads up,"

Hel's smile returned. She looked back at her father and buried her face in his chest. This was a strange feeling for Loki. He didn't really have the chance to hug his children much and he never got many in his own childhood.

He gently allowed his hands to fall on her back.

The hug ended and Hel returned her gaze to the fire pit where she would soon watch the fights. Odin looked at his son. He gave a nod

and a grin.

Loki was in too much shock to acknowledge it the way he wanted to but he nodded to at least show some respect. A Herculean task.

Sorry wrong mythology but Thorian would be too much for Loki.

With Hiccup

Hiccup and the others were in the same forest overlooking the same field. They stood waiting not nearly as anxious as they had been the previous day.

"I wonder who they'll send first," Stolt said.

"I hope it's that bitch Lofa," Vakker said angrily.

Svartur looked at Hiccup. Her look said all. "Do you see what I had to put up with?"

Hiccup gave a small smile.

Svartur walked over to Hiccup.

"So why do they hate each other so much?" Hiccup asked.

Svartur just started shaking her head. "You're not even going to believe this. It's over marriage. I don't know how it came up in conversation but we started talking about it. Vakker said marriage was about love and Lofa said it was just an agreement needed to keep humanity going."

"Wow," Hiccup said. "We just told drinking stories,"

"I wish I was so lucky," Svartur said. "The two were going to start swinging if they hadn't tired out."

"Now I kind of want them to get it over with," Hiccup said.

"Guys," Finharen said. "I think I see someone coming out of the forest,"

On the other side of the field Tyr's champion emerged from the forest. He walked to the center of the field.

"I am Tyr's champion," he called out the same way Vali's champion had done yesterday. "We challenge the champion of Njord,"

Finkaren cracked his neck and rolled his shoulders. He took one breath and began walking out to the man that was challenging him.

"Do you think you can beat him?" Stolt asked.

"Son, I fought storms and dragons just to bring home a good catch," Finkaren said. "Some young buck with a hammer is not high on my worry list,"

He continued.

Hiccup admired the man. Despite the fact that they could not die here he couldn't imagine that losing to this man would be pleasant. That hammer would cause some pain. If you didn't let that kill you and just hit you there was a guarantee of broken bones.

Finkaren came within a few feet of Tyr's champion. Finkaren then placed his spear in his shield hand and approached Tyr's champion. He extended a hand.

"Goodâ€|" Was all Finkaren was able to say.

Tyr's champion punched him in the face. Hiccup found himself instinctively reaching for his crossbow to kill the man from here. Stolt stopped him. The continued to look on.

Finkaren returned to his feet. "Haven't you ever heard of honor?"

"Yes, I have," Tyr said. "That's why I didn't kill you on the floor. But as for shaking the hand of an enemyâ€| that won't happen. An enemy does not deserve that respect,"

"Even enemies can show respect," Finkaren said.

Tyr's champion laughed. "That must have been a long time ago, Old Man,"

"Maybe," Finkaren said. "And now I'm happy your kind did not inhabit those times,"

Tyr's champion no longer smiled. The comment was more offensive than it sounded. "Time to die Old Man,"

The man assumed a ready stance. Finkaren did so as well.

They circled each other with their weapons and shields pointed at their enemy. Finkaren feigned attacks. Each time the man flinched at counter.

"Come on Boy," Finkaren said. "You can't be that jumpy,"

The man didn't like the comment. He went right at Finkaren. Finkaren tried to stave him off with the range of his spear. The man broke the defense relatively easily. Finkaren backed up as the man swung his hammer for him.

Finkaren blocked it with his shield. His arm felt the pain of the man's strength. Nonetheless he did not falter.

They stood frozen for a moment. Then Finkaren threw the man's hammer off of his shield and kicked the man in the chest. He paced back.

The man was shocked. He didn't think the older man could hit that hard. He quickly regained his breath. He had to because Finkaren now stabbed at him with his spear.

The man blocked. Finkaren continued his offensive. The man was able to block each stab until his shield wasn't where he planned it to be.

Finkaren's spear slid off the top of the man's shield and sliced a gash in the man's arm. The man backed away quickly using his superior agility and endurance to get away from Finkaren who was now breathing heavily.

The man checked his wound. Not bad but still this old man had broken his defenses. That was a problem.

Tyr's champion attacked. His hammer fell from above and swung from the sides. Each time Finkaren blocked. However, Finkaren was beginning to feel the fatigue that now plagued his older age.

Finkaren was running out of blocks and dodges. Tyr's champion on the other hand still had plenty of attacks.

Finkaren's arm finally fell and the man took his opportunity. He swung upward, hitting the older man in the chest. He fell gasping for breath. Blood spurted out of his mouth. The blow had cracked a lot of ribs and punctured a lung.

His insides were badly damaged. He was guaranteed to die.

"Well Old Man," Tyr's champion said. "Your choice. I crush your skull or you can sit there and just die,"

Finkaren sat on the ground. He seemed in a haze. His breathing was heavy and his eyes losing their luster. His hand held on to his spear with just the tips of its fingers.

"Well?" The man asked.

Without warning or hesitation Finkaren's grip on his spear tightened and with all the strength left in his body jammed the spear into the other man's chest. The head buried itself right near the heart.

The man looked utterly shocked.

Finkaren smiled through the blood in his mouth. The last of his energy expended he fell back and died.

Just as this happened the other fighter reached up and grabbed the spear. He then did the dumbest thing any warrior could ever do.

He pulled it out.

The spear head had pierced the aorta. The largest artery in the body. The blood that poured out of the man was enough to make the most seasoned soldier ill. It was a matter of seconds until he bled out and died right beside his enemy.

No champion on either side moved or spoke. No one knew how to react. Who had won? Who had lost?

With Loki

None of the gods spoke. They just sat there in complete shock.

"Who wins?" Hel whispered to Loki.

"I'm not sure," He answered.

Thor stood. For once he controlled his emotions. He calmly looked at his father. "Tyr's champion clearly deserves the victory. Njord's man died first."

"True," Odin said. "But Tyr's hero can't continue either,"

Thor was becoming a little hot headed. Loki jumped in while keeping his seat. He couldn't exactly leap into the argument with Hel on his lap.

"I'll take a draw and we start a new round with whatever champion Thor wants to send next. That sounds fair doesn't it Brother?"

Thor stopped himself from yelling at Loki. He instead nodded.

"Good," Odin said. "Then the two will return here. Send whoever you want next Thor,"

Thor nodded to Ullr. He disappeared.

With Hiccup

"Did we win?" Vakker asked.

"I don't know," Stolt said.

Both bodies remained on the field. The warriors lied in the grass with their eyes open in a dead expression.

Then they disappeared.

They looked across the field. Emerging from the trees was a man with a bow on his back. He had two knives on his belt. They were longer than most knives but smaller than swords. It was Ullr's champion.

He reached the site of the previous battle.

"I am Ullr's champion," the man called out. "Before I issue my challenge I would like to explain something. The last fight has been declared a draw."

He gave time for the champions on the other side to take that in.

"Next," the man continued. "I want to challenge Loki's champion. Butâ€|"

Hiccup stopped himself from walking out.

"As you can see I'm not a big fan of 'fighting' per se," the man said. "I want there to be a test of accuracy. I saw thatâ€| thingâ€| on your back and it looks like a bow. Let's see how good you are with it."

Hiccup thought about it. This man was a hunter. That was no question. He probably had some prowess with the weapon.

Hiccup took his crossbow off of his back. He stepped out of the forest. Ullr's champion saw him. He nodded to Hiccup.

"What did you have in mind?" Hiccup asked.

"I was kind of hoping the gods would help me with that," Ullr's champion said.

"Well planned," Hiccup said sarcastically.

The man laughed. This was the first time that any member of the opposing side had laughed at anything Hiccup had to say. "You're a funny kid," the man said. "My name is Skytt,"

"Hiccup," Hiccup said.

"Okay, stop," a voice commanded. Ullr was suddenly there with them. "Fraternalizing with the enemy is a problem. This is how it will work."

Ullr waved his hand and a group of unconscious Goblins appeared.

"What are those things?" Skytt asked.

"Goblins," Hiccup said in shock.

"How do you know?" Skytt asked.

"I had a run in with them a couple weeks ago," Hiccup said.

"May I explain why they're here?" Ullr said.

The warriors nodded.

"Okay," Ullr said. "They will try to kill you. It's just instinctual. You can only use your bows. Don't die. If I were you guys I would get a distance. Arrows to the head are five points. Arrows to the chest, neck or abdomen are three. And if an arrow hits the heart it's ten. Most points after all of them are dead wins,"

The two nodded.

"Like I said: Distance probably matters here," Ullr disappeared.

The enemies looked at each other. The two turned and sprinted up the nearest incline. They both reached the top and turned. They saw that the goblins were waking.

"Any advice, Hiccup?" Skytt asked.

"Yeah," Hiccup said drawing on his last experience with Goblins. "Don't get captured."

"I'll keep that in mind," Skytt said.

The Goblins saw the two humans.

"Come on you ugly bastards!" Skytt yelled.

"They can understand us," Hiccup said.

"Shit," Skytt said.

With Astrid

She had already dropped by Hiccup's house. He still wasn't awake. She was slowly feeling lonelier. Yeah she still had friends and family.

A whole lot more than Hiccup had when he felt lonely.

That just added to anger. Hiccup was able to grit his teeth and persist through his whole childhood and her Astrid was feeling lonely and she was just missing one person.

How weak could she get? She wanted to punch something.

But instead she settled for a flight with Stormfly.

The two rose through the air. They weren't as agile or in command of the sky as Hiccup and Toothless were but they had their own way of flying.

Astrid flew through the clouds. They had such a relaxing quality. She reached up and touched the clouds. She flew a little longer.

She couldn't help but think what the other villager might think if they found out about Hiccup's absence. They would probably become very concerned. Too concerned. Probably to the point where they would be unable to concentrate on their own business.

Hiccup was the future of the tribe. He was also the one who kept the dragons and Vikings peaceful.

Astrid cringed at the idea of another seven generations of war.

She shook herself out of it.

Hiccup would be back eventually. He had to. Astrid wasn't doing well after two days. A life time was simply no applicable.

6. Chapter 6

****First I want to apologize for not updating in over a week. I lost interest in the story for a little bit. I thought you should know that I feel so bad for letting this just sit for so long. ****

****Onto the summary. Hiccup and Skytt start their challenge. Astrid has a heart to heart with an unlikely character. Snot continues to wait for Hiccup to wake up and Toothless tries not to die from boredom while he's visited by someone he would never expect.****

****Please review, share and enjoy!****

* * *

><p>Chapter 6<p>

Skytt notched an arrow. Hiccup loaded his own weapon.

Skytt aimed, drew back, and released. The arrow flew toward the contingent. It struck a Goblin in the eye. He fell dead. The others looked at their fallen comrade and then back to the champions.

Hiccup aimed and fired. His own bolt hit a Goblin in the mouth. It buried itself in the back of his throat. The Goblins once again saw one of their own fall.

"I guess that's how we'll tell the kills apart," Skytt said.

Hiccup gave a questioning look.

"The fletchings," Skytt said.

The fletchings were those feathers on the back of arrows. Skytt's were red and Hiccup's were black. Hiccup had recently become more attached to the color black.

That just reminded him. He hadn't seen Toothless in two days. He hoped that he was okay. Not to mention all his other family and friends.

Suddenly Hiccup was shaken out of his thoughts. The group of Goblins gave out a war cry and were beginning to form some type of organized attack.

"Question," Skytt said.

"What?" Hiccup said.

"What happens if they get close?" Skytt asked. "Do we just let them kill us or are we allowed to kill them throughâ€| other methods." Skytt patted one of his daggers.

"Not really sure," Hiccup replied.

The small army charged. Hiccup released another bolt and so did Skytt.

Suddenly their arrows froze in air and the army was stopped in their tracks.

Ullr was standing with them again. "Yeah, maybe I was a little unclear," Ullr said. "Your orders are technically not to die so if they get close feel free to use other weapons. They just won't be counted.

"Sounds good," Skytt said.

"Let's go," Hiccup said.

Ullr disappeared.

The arrows continued on their path and the army resumed its charge.

Skytt's arrow hit a Goblin in the neck while Hiccup's hit another in his solar plexus.

"It's gonna be close," Skytt said happily.

They both reloaded. The Goblins were getting closer to them. They both figured now would be a good time to retreat. They turned and bolted down the other side of the hill. When they reached the bottom they turned toward the army that was bound to reach the top of the hill.

Three Goblins reached the top of the hill. The champions loosed their arrows. Skytt's hit a Goblin in the chest. He fell and died. Hiccup's missed.

"Damn," Hiccup said.

"Chin up," Skytt said. "You'll get the next one,"

What kind of enemy was this guy?

They fell back a little more. And turned again. This time Hiccup exhaled as he squeezed the trigger. His bolt hit an enemy in the chest. Specifically the heart.

"That's more like it," Skytt said.

Hiccup sort of ignored the compliment as he reloaded with blinding speed. He let loose another arrow that hit an enemy in the leg. He stumbled and fell. He wasn't dead.

The rest of the contingent ignored their fallen ally and continued their hunt for the two bowmen.

Hiccup and Skytt turned and broke out in a full retreat. They needed to get more distance between them and the Goblins. They were faster. They had less armor and were in better condition than their enemies.

Plus Hiccup had learned a little something about the Goblins on his journey to their group of islands. Goblins had a terrible case of "pack mentality".

He remembered when he rained attacks on the beach of one of those islands. He remembered that the goblins bunched together and when they did they seemed to feel more formidable and safer.

So if Hiccup was correct, the Goblins would only be as fast as their slowest member. They would try to keep as many healthy warriors together as they could.

"Skytt," Hiccup said as they ran. "They'll stay bunched together. Don't ask how I know. We can keep our distance pretty easily."

"You're the expert," Skytt said.

They stopped turned and fired. Both hit goblins in their necks. They continued their retreat. At this rate their stamina just might give

out. They would have to find a way to make a stand and ensure that they could be safe for at least a few minutes to squeeze off a few shots.

Hiccup saw it. There was a massive boulder sticking out of the earth. It was a good place as any to make a stand.

"Follow me," Hiccup said turning toward it. Skytt was on his tail.

Hiccup and Skytt reached the rock and bound up to the top in great time. They loaded, aimed and fired. The arrow flew out to meet the charging force.

Skytt's arrow struck a Goblin in the head, piercing straight into the brain. Hiccup's hit another Goblin in the chest.

Skytt loaded again and let another fly. Another shot to the head.

Tied.

Hiccup realized the tie. He didn't care though. He had nearly forgotten that this was a competition. He was having too much fun.

People might say that sounds slightlyâ€| sadistic. But, Hiccup knew full well that the Goblins were evil and killing them was basically a service. At least most Goblins were evil. A flash of Bryr entered Hiccup's head. He hadn't thought of him in a while. Plus, they probably existed here the same way that Hiccup and the other champions.

"So you gonna take more shots?" Skytt asked. "Or am I going to have to finish these bastards by myself?"

"Don't get too full of yourself," Hiccup said. He reloaded and fired a shot. It struck a Goblin in the neck.

Hiccup and Skytt continued to fire arrows at their enemies. They lost count of points entirely. The Goblins began to scale the rock they stood on top of.

One reached for Hiccup's leg. Hiccup flipped the blade out of his crossbow and brought it down on the vertebrate in its neck. The Goblin slid down the rock landing on top of some of his comrades as they were climbing. It bought the two a little bit more time.

"What the Hel was that?" Skytt yelled.

"Just a little tool I invented," Hiccup said as he replaced the blade in the butt of the crossbow.

"You'll have to show me that later," Skytt said.

"Sure," Hiccup said. "But right now, let's just stay alive,"

"Agreed," Skytt said.

They continued to rain down their barrage of arrows. Until finallyâ€|

There was nothing more to fire at. All the Goblins lay dead.

Both breathed heavily. The speed at which they loaded and released arrows was amazing.

"So who do you think won?" Skytt said.

"Don't know," Hiccup said "I lost count,"

"Me too,"

"Well it's not over," Ullr said appearing next to them.

"What do you mean?" Skytt said. "They're all dead,"

"Not _all_," Ullr returned.

Hiccup and Skytt thought it over. The one Hiccup shot in the leg. He must not have died yet.

"Turns out you guys are tied," Ullr said. "He's the tie breaker,"

They exchanged looks and began to sprint toward the injured Goblin. Hiccup wanted to win. He didn't really know why he wanted to so badly. He guessed that it was just some sort of competitive nature in him.

The two loaded their weapons as they ran.

Hiccup and Skytt were in a dead sprint to where the Goblin would be. But he wasn't there.

They climbed the incline where they had first started this challenge. The Goblin was far from them and limping as fast as he could. Hiccup began running down the incline to get a better shot.

Skytt stopped and raised his bow. He lined up his shot. Then he let his arrow fly. Hiccup watched the arrow fly much like he wanted to do. Then the strange force that kept things attached to Earth started to drag the arrow back down from its high perch.

Unfortunately for the Goblin it was dragged down right on his back. As it struck the Goblin he fell flat on his face and died.

Hiccup was in absolute shock. That was an unbelievable shot. Skytt was even a little stunned. It was pretty far.

Ullr appeared with them. He had a smile on his face. "Good work, Skytt," he said.

"Thank you," Skytt said trying to regain his breath.

Hiccup stood there slightly angry at himself. Skytt approached him and extended his hand. The gesture had no malice or condescension in it at all. Hiccup happily shook his hand. "Better luck next time Hiccup,"

"Yeah," Hiccup said. "If there ever is one,"

Skytt smiled. "You have a point. This does seem like a once in a lifetime kind of thing."

Hiccup nodded.

"Both of you return to your respective forests," Ullr said. "We still have other fights to get through today,"

The two nodded. They gave their goodbyes and left.

Hiccup returned to the forest. His small band of champions greeted him. Hiccup was happy to see that all of them were so welcoming after his loss.

"So that was interesting," Svartur said. "He didn't seem like a total ass,"

"I know," Hiccup said. "He's really nice,"

"Still the enemy," Stolt reminds them.

"Coming from the guy who was laughing with the man who killed me," Svartur said.

Stolt shut up quickly.

"They're sending someone out," Vakker said.

They all looked out to see Var's champion. Immediately, Vakker became anxious. She wanted to get out there and take her head.

"Go ahead Bitch," Vakker said. "Call me out,"

"We challenge Lofn's champion," Lofa said.

"Yes!" Vakker said grabbing her axe and readying to fight. She began walking out. She was going to win this one no matter what.

"Good luck Vakker," Svartur said.

Vakker seemingly ignored the vote of confidence. She was really just too concentrated to focus on anything else.

It's not like being ignored was new to Svartur.

Hiccup, Stolt, and Svartur watched as Vakker made her way toward her enemy.

Stolt nudged Hiccup. "Hey Hiccup," Stolt whispered. Hiccup looked at the large man. "Catfight," Stolt raised his eyebrows and gave a knowing smile.

Hiccup just shook his head.

"What?" Stolt asked.

With Astrid

Astrid wasn't very good at expressing emotions. At least not in a healthy way. She was sad that she couldn't see Hiccup. And instead of telling one of her friends how she felt she kept it to herself.

Due to that, her sadness became anger. And when Astrid was angry people usually stayed out of her way. Too bad training dummies couldn't.

Astrid let another small axe fly at one of the dummies in the arena. It hit exactly where she knew it would. That was her last one.

Still fuming she went to retrieve the multiple axes lodged inside the dummy. Stormfly was laying down watching her rider ruthlessly attack these dummies.

She returned to her same place and took a few more steps back. She repeated her actions of the past hour or so. The axes flew once again with amazing accuracy.

She finally let out a sigh. She had one last axe.

"Is there something you want to talk about Young Hofferson?" A voice said emerging from the shadows.

Astrid raised her axe in throwing position. She then saw the speaker.

Stoick looked at Astrid with a serious look on his face.

"Chief Stoick," Astrid said in shock lowering her axe. "I'm sorryâ€¦"

Stoick held up a hand. "I snuck up on you. I should be apologizing,"

"It's fine," Astrid said.

Astrid was a brave, beautiful kick-ass Viking girl who feared nothing. Except talking to the Chief of her village**/**her boyfriend's dad.

"Like I said," Stoick continued. "Is there something you want to talk about?"

"What? Uhâ€¦ nope. Can't say that there is. Why do you askâ€¦ Sir?" Astrid returned awkwardly.

Stoick gave her knowing look. "I believe that dummy would beg to differ," Stoick said gesturing to the dummy that was nearly torn apart.

"It's just practice Sir," Astrid said.

"You don't have to call me sir," Stoick said. "You are more important to my son than you know. You're practically part of the family,"

Astrid blushed. She couldn't help but think of marriage.

"Besides the question was only a formality," Stoick said bringing Astrid back to reality. "I know why you're so upset,"

Astrid gave a worried look.

"Snotlout told me that you're the only one outside of the family that knows about Hiccup's condition," Stoick said.

"Well yeah,"

"And you just want to be able to talk to him," Stoick said.

"Yes butâ€|"

"And the fact that you can't just depresses you,"

Astrid just looked at the Chief.

"And that depression turns into anger,"

Astrid was shocked how the Chief had figured her out so easily.

"And that happens," Stoick pointed to the dummy.

"How did youâ€|?"

"I went through the same thing about fourteen years ago," Stoick said. The sadness in his own eyes began to show. Astrid made the connection. Valhallarama. "The difficulty of just not being able to talk to the one you love is unbearable. I had to deal with it. But Hiccup will be back. That I can promise you. He's too stubborn to die in his sleep. Until then try to talk about your sadness. It's not as healthy as it feels to throw axes at dummies,"

Stoick gave a warm smile that Astrid was able to return. He turned and exited the arena.

Astrid let her head fall. She hated talking about her feelings to anyone. Except Hiccup.

She sighed and without looking threw her axe at the dummy. It hit home.

With Snotlout

"Seriously?" Snot said in an angry tone. "How can you still be asleep? It's not normal." Snot stopped. Then continued looking at his cousin. "Then again, nothing about you is normal, is it?"

Snot went through the events over the past few months with blinding speed in his head.

Hiccup became the best dragon fighter in the village. Then when he is chosen to slay a Monstrous Nightmare in front of Berk he tries to befriend it. And when the village erupts in anger it tries to kill him.

And then of all the dragons that inhabit the world a Night Fury rescues his strange cousin.

After Toothless was taken and Hiccup was disowned he comes up with the ballsy plan of training more dragons to fly into battle against a dragon that takes up an entire mountain. And all to save his dragon and the father who wouldn't look at him.

And when that battle did come Hiccup _led_ them without a visual show of fear. And when he was reunited with Toothless he goes off and fights this massive dragon with only his Night Fury.

And even after all that happened to him on Berk Hiccup still went along with his plan to kill the huge dragon. Hiccup sacrificed his leg for them all.

But Snot knew that Hiccup was willing to sacrifice more that day. If Hiccup needed to he would have laid down his life right then and there to save his friends, his family, his people, even the dragons he hadn't trained yet.

Snot had respected him ever since then. He still poked fun at him every once in awhile but only in good fun now.

Snot couldn't believe that after all he had put Hiccup through he still treated him like a friend. Hell, he treated him like a cousin should treat a cousin.

Yes, Hiccup was certainly anything but normal. He was a Viking. That much was undeniable. He was born into one of the most Viking families there was. He had the stubbornness and the will of an ox.

But when it came to being a cruel warrior he lacked it. When it came to picking on the weak, he couldn't do it.

Snot began to smile. "Maybe if you were the form of normal around here," Snot said. "We would all be better off,"

With Loki

"Tough luck Brother," Thor said cockily.

"No matter," Loki says shrugging. "You win some, you lose some. I can still enjoy Lofn's victory."

Thor sneered.

Loki just maintained his smile. He couldn't stand the idea of Thor having a victory. But, he was the ultimate showman. After all he was the Liesmith.

"Sorry about the loss Daddy," Hel said apologetically.

"It's fine, Dear," Loki said.

What did I just say?

Hel just smiled. He called her "Dear". She was practically giddy.

Loki tried to act as normal as possible. Like the child on his lap _wasn't_ about to explode with absolute joy. It was working for the most part.

He tried not to look at her too much. It didn't hurt Hel at all. In fact by him acting like it was just normal just gave to her happiness.

With Toothless

"**Whyâ€| won'tâ€|heâ€| wake up?"** Toothless said smashing his head against a tree in the forest.

Toothless had decided he would walk around the Isle of Berk. Try to get Hiccup off his mind. The boredom was eating him away. Without his best friend Toothless had no desires to fly or to do anything really.

He was only alive because of Hiccup. Their bond was stronger than even the Queen of Dragons. That much was proven. Toothless could only hop that Hiccup's slumber would end soon.

Toothless gave up on hitting his head on the tree and backed off.

He walked backwards and fired very accurate bolts of blue fire. Not enough start a fire but enough to burn the tree slightly.

"**Someone seems upset,"** Hookfang said walking toward Toothless.

"**What do you want?" **Toothless said getting defensive as soon as he heard the Nightmare approach.

"**Relax,"** she said. "**I'm just as bored as you,"**

"**Doubtful,"** Toothless returned.

"**Your rider won't wake up,"** Hookfang said. "**For some odd reason, my rider refuses to leave his side. So, now I have nothing to do?"**

"**Are you seriously blaming Hiccup?"** Toothless said igniting some flames in his mouth.

"**I am,"** Hookfang said. "**But, I'm not here to fight about it or blame you,"**

Toothless gave a puzzled look. "**Then why are you here?"**

Hookfang looked away awkwardly. "**I came toâ€|"** Hookfang swallowed her pride. "**Thank you."**

Toothless' jaw dropped in the same fashion it did when he first felt Hiccup attach his artificial tail fin. "**For what?"**

"**Coming back for me and all the others a few weeks ago,"**

"**Hiccup was the one who wanted to save you guys,"**

"**So you're saying you would have left us?"**

Toothless stopped himself. He was going to say no. But he couldn't bring himself to let her have that victory. Then he was going to say yes. But he wasn't going to lie.

The truth was he would have saved them.

He didn't know why, but Toothless felt that he would not be able to leave any dragon behind.

***I don't know,"** he said finally. **"We never will know."**

***I have a feeling you wouldn't,"** Hookfang said with a toothy grin.

***Feelings mean nothing,"** Toothless said.

***You of all dragons should know that's a lie,"** Hookfang said.

7. Chapter 7

I am so sorry for it being 12 days since I last updated but it's the end of the school year by me so that means studying for finals and stuff. I have almost no time to do this anymore. But I assure you that as soon as summer gets here I'll be trying to write a lot more. Thanks for the patience.

**Please review, share, and enjoy! **

* * *

><p>Chapter 7<p>

Lofa waited for Vakker to get to the middle of the field. She didn't have the cocky smile that they were so accustomed to seeing on the face of Thor's champions. Instead was the determined look of a warrior.

She wanted to shut Vakker up. Her childish belief in the idea of love made her sick and it was time to end it.

Lofa was an attractive woman. A woman many men would want as a wife. But, she had this knack for voicing her opinion a little too loudly. She was strong willed like most Viking women but even they would bend on occasion.

Not Lofa.

She had given up on love to be honest. She covered it with her outward disdain for the idea and the denial of its existence.

Vakker reached the center of the field where she had watched friend and foe fight and fall.

Vakker held her axe in a ready position. Lofa returned the stance with her spear. The women had no love for the other.

This was going to be a viscous battle.

With Astrid

Astrid had finished her "practicing".

She was trying to follow the Chief's advice. After all he knew what she was going through without Hiccup. She thought that maybe if she told someone about how sad she was it would make it somewhatâ€|better.

Now she was thinking who she could go to.

Fishlegs was nice. But, he was soâ€| strange. She didn't pick on Fishlegs. In fact she treated him nicely. But she had a limit.

Tuffnut. Yeah, maybe when Berk's summer lasts all year.

Ruffnut possibly. The two were best friends. But, she would probably just laugh at her. Besides none of them even knew about Hiccup's state.

There was always Snotlout. He was in the same boat. For some reason he needed to talk to Hiccup. Of all days it could have happened, it happened when Snot needed to talk to him. He might be a good candidate.

But one name kept coming up in her head.

Gobber.

He was very good with teens. That's why he was the dragon training teacher.

She went to the forge to find him.

She entered the forge. "Gobber?" She called out. There was no response.

She started looking around. She had been in the forge plenty of times. She had to get her axe sharpened a lot. And now that she and Hiccup were together she was here even more often.

Astrid went over to the fire pit where there was a large sword. It was glowing red. It was obviously not finished.

She shrugged. _How hard could it be?_

She threw on a pair of gloves that she assumed belonged to Hiccup. She grabbed the pair of tongs she saw forgers use many times. She grabbed the piece of hot iron and moved it over to the anvil.

She placed it down.

So far so good.

She looked for the hammer. She grabbed it. She swung at the sword. She kept doing it.

"Hiccup?" Gobber's voice said. "You're back?" He entered the forge. "Oh. Hi Astrid."

Astrid gave a curt wave.

"Wait!" He said. "Astrid? What are you doing?"

He hobbled over to where the girl was working on the sword.

"Just helping," She said nonchalantly.

He looked at the sword and held it up. Astrid had been hitting the same side for a couple minutes. It was bent and no longer a sword.

Astrid had a look of absolute shame. "Sorry Gobber," Astrid said. "I thought it would be easy,"

Gobber looked at the ruined sword and then back to Astrid. He just started laughing. "Swords are swords," Gobber said. "I can always make more. It's the thought that counts,"

Astrid smiled weakly. And to think she had come here for help. And she had ruined his sword and was about to ask him to listen to her problems.

"Do you have a minute?" Astrid asked him.

"Of course Astrid," Gobber said. "What can I do ya for?"

With Vakker

Vakker looked over the woman she wanted to rip to shreds since last night. She looked like a decent fighter.

Lofa did the same.

Vakker made the first move. She inched closer to her enemy and swung her axe for the other woman. Lofa blocked with her shield. She returned with a stab for the girl's chest. Vakker blocked and retreated slightly.

Vakker was right back on the offense. She swung at the other woman. She battered her shield. Lofa's arm was beginning to ache from the constant attacks.

But she held firm. She finally countered by throwing her shield to her side just as the axe connected.

Vakker lost her balance slightly but recovered just in time to dodge a spear. She once again laid off from her attacks just to catch her breath. Lofa took the time to stop the ache in her arm. It went away fairly quickly.

The two women looked at each other. They still held the hatred that kept their fight going. They began quick attacks on the other one and retreating right afterward.

Each shot was blocked and parried. The two were evenly matched.

There was no major advantage or disadvantage. The two were the same

age and build. They had no way of gaining an upper hand.

It would be a long fight.

With Stoick

Stoick kept his strong demeanor. For the sake of his tribe he maintained his confident look. He was the Chief they needed.

None of them knew what happened to Hiccup. Most of them didn't even notice his disappearance.

Stoick walked through the village observing the daily routines of his tribe's members. But, as he walked he could not help but think of his son.

He worried. _Who falls asleep for days on end?_

This was such a strange event.

He felt lost in his thoughts. He could not help but think of his wife. She had not died in her sleep. Stoick wished she did. Well, he truly wished she hadn't at all.

Stoick shook the thought from his head. He could not afford to think of her at a time like this.

He had to be optimistic.

He was the Chief. He was the embodiment of the tribe's strength and bravery. If he was weak the tribe was weak. And Stoick always refused to be weak.

But Stoick always ignored one important fact about himself.

He was human.

With Vakker

The fight had gone on for quite awhile. Both women were finally beginning to tire. Their viscous swings and stabs were finally becoming slower.

Vakker and Lofa once again stepped away from each other.

Gone were the looks of hatred and disgust. Now they were replaced with ones of exhaustion and fatigue.

Vakker came up with an idea. Despite her weariness her brain was still functioning. She just hoped her body would co-operate with the plan.

She just stood there in a ready stance. Waiting for her opponent to make a move.

Lofa did. She moved towards Vakker with her spear ready. She lunged at the other woman but was blocked.

Vakker began her slow retreat. Lofa stayed on her.

There were a few mow stabs as Lofa followed Vakker, but none made it through Vakker's defenses.

Vakker then skipped a step and stabbed strongly for Vakker.

Finally!

Vakker sidestepped the blow and quickly hooked the head of her axe on the top of Lofa's shield and pulled her towards her. As she did so she swept her leg as she came forward.

Lofa fell forward and landed on top of her shield. Before she could roll or do anything to get herself out of the situation, Vakker brought her axe down as fast as she could on Lofa's back.

The axe cut clean through the spinal cord.

Lofa died and Vakker won.

With Hiccup

"Wow that was a long fight," Hiccup observed.

"And a good one," Stolt said.

"I'm not getting any sleep tonight," Svartur said.

With Loki

"Well," Loki said looking toward his brother.

Thor held up a hand. "Save it,"

"You're no fun," Loki said.

"How about we call it a day?" Odin said.

Both brothers looked at each other and nodded.

"Good," Odin said.

With Hiccup

Vakker returned to her team. She barely broke the tree line before she collapsed on the ground completely spent.

Stolt went over to her and helped her to a more comfortable place.

Svartur and Hiccup waited to see who the other team would send out next.

But, no one came.

"I think we might be done for the day," Hiccup said.

"I think so too," Svartur said.

Suddenly they were in Valhalla again. They were greeted by

Finkaren.

With Astrid

Gobber just looked at the young woman before him. She had just emptied out her burden about Hiccup. That while she may not be losing her sanity in his absence but she was certainly under a lot of stress not knowing what was going on with him.

Astrid stared back at Gobber waiting for his response.

Gobber always knew what to say when it came to kids but this was a situation that wasn't exactly common. He was at a shortness for words. He had to think.

Gobber finally came up with something.

"Have you tried staying with him?" Gobber asked.

"Gobber, I'm trying not to think of him," Astrid said. "Being in the same room as him isn't going to help that,"

"Then don't try not to think of him," Gobber said. Astrid looked confused. It was the Viking way to get over your problems and act like they were gone. At least emotional ones. Physical ones were usually cut to pieces. But, this was not a problem she could cut with an axe.

She preferred those kind of problems.

Gobber continued. "Ignoring a problem does not solve it," He said. "Confrontation usually does,"

"How do I confront someone who won't wake up?" Astrid asked becoming slightly angry.

"You're not trying to confront Hiccup," Gobber said. "You confront what is bothering you. And from what you told me it's that you can't talk to him. Go tell him that. Even if he won't hear it, maybe saying it out loud with him in the room might help to ease your mind. Maybe."

Astrid thought it over. Then she began to smile. She was glad she had come to Gobber.

She thanked him and began to run for Hiccup's house.

With Hiccup

Hiccup and the other champions were allowed to spend the rest of the day doing what they like in the large cabin that held the champions' barracks.

Most stayed in the common room and talked about today's fights. Others formed different conversations.

Hiccup stood with Svartur, Adla, and Skytt.

Adla was commenting on how great the both of them were with their respective weapons. Which reminded Skytt

"You plan on showing me that weapon of yours?" Skytt said.

Hiccup shrugged. He took the crossbow off his back and held it out for Skytt to inspect.

Skytt whistled. "It certainly isâ€¦ different." He said. "Where did you get the idea?"

"Romans," Hiccup said. "They use thisâ€¦ larger version. I made it smaller and the bladeâ€¦ wellâ€¦ at the time let's just say I wasn't using swords."

Svartur gave him a strange look.

Hiccup sighed. "Everyone else knows," he said. "You might as well,"

Hiccup quickly told Svartur the story of how he hurt Venn and the oath that came right afterward.

"I didn't even know," Svartur said. "Why didn't you ever tell me?"

"It wasn't exactly something I went around bragging about,"

"Still," Svartur said.

"This would probably explain why Var isn't your biggest fan," Skytt observed.

"Yeah that's what Loki told me," Hiccup said.

"Well at least she has a good reason," Svartur said. "Vali was just bored from what I've heard,"

"You're just angry his champion killed you," Adla said.

"Shut up, you ass," Svartur said.

"Alright guys relax," Hiccup said.

Svartur and Adla stopped their bickering despite the fact that it was all in good fun.

They continued to talk. Adla was enjoying himself. He never knew how much fun Svartur and Hiccup were. He found himself looking back and thanking his former self for not being one of the countless others who relentlessly tortured Hiccup.

Skytt had heard the stories of Hiccup. Even before the Battle of the Green Death. Of course the stories changed dramatically after said event. But, now Skytt spoke to the famous Viking that was once a pain in the sides of every Viking but now a hero to them all and he couldn't help but try to imagine why anyone would pick on him.

He was different, that was for sure. He was not strong by any definition of the word. But he was funny, considerate, and a generally good guy to be around. Even though Skytt had only known Hiccup for a day so far he found himself admiring the young man. He

admired his courage and resilience. Skytt made himself a promise.

If Hiccup ever needed help in Midgard he would be the first one on the ship to fight for him. He couldn't explain it but there was a feeling that he couldn't shake.

A feeling that that day would come.

With Astrid

Astrid arrived at the Haddock house. She entered and ran up the stairs. She opened the door to Hiccup's room and ran inside.

She was tripped on her way in. She hit the ground hard.

She rolled to her back to find Snot standing over her with his hammer raised. He saw her and relaxed. "Astrid?"

"Yes you idiot," she said.

"Sorry," Snot said helping her up. "I didn't know who it was. I needed to protect my cousin,"

It's comforting that he gives a shit.

"It's fine," Astrid said shaking off the feeling she had to beat Snot to death with his own arm.

"So why are you here?" Snot asked.

Astrid began to blush slightly. She didn't know how weird this was going to sound. "I have toâ€¦ talkâ€¦ to Hiccup,"

Snot blinked. He was going to ridicule her for wanting to talk to someone who wasn't even awake but he rethought it. Not because of the definite beating he would receive.

What held him back was the fact that he had been doing the same thing a moment ago.

"Sure," Snot said. "I understand,"

Astrid gave him a wary look.

Snot raised his hands. "You gotta do what you gotta do,"

Astrid thanked Snot as he left the room.

Astrid pulled up a chair to the side of Hiccup's bed. She sat down he looked at him silently.

In today's day and age people sleeping for extended periods of time aren't _too_ stressful for families. Doctors can say they that their vitals are fine. Sometimes the doctors cause the coma for medical reasons.

But in Viking times, if someone slept for a couple of days it usually meant one thing.

Death.

She pushed her fears of him passing away out of her head.

"Hey Hiccup," she said awkwardly.

There was no response.

"This is so stupid!" Astrid said getting up and pacing the room. She stopped and took a breath. She had to do this.

She sat back down.

"Hey Hiccup," she repeated. "I don't know why you won't wake up but everyone's getting worried,"

She stopped and closed her eyes.

"I'm getting worried and I'm gettingâ€¦ scared," she said fighting off the tear that was forming in her eye. Astrid wasn't used to feeling fear. "You have to wake up soon. Toothless, you're dad Snot, Gobber and everyone else is really concerned andâ€¦ I can't believe I'm doing this!"

She stopped herself from once again trying to talk herself out of it.

"You mean _so_ much to me Hiccup," Astrid said. "If I lose youâ€¦" She felt the tears returning and quickly stopped the thought from fully forming. "I love you Hiccup. Please come back."

Astrid got up and kissed him goodbye.

She turned and exited the room looking back and silently praying that Hel had not gotten her hands on him yet.

8. Chapter 8

****I don't want to ruin it but I put in something that a couple people have asked for. Also I may have broken the fourth wall once. Just imagine it didn't happen if you didn't like it.****

****Once again sorry for the delay. This should have been up days ago.****

****Please review, share, and enjoy!****

* * *

><p>Chapter 8<p>

Dinner finally arrived and Hiccup was hungry. He dug in and didn't bother to notice the strange stare he was getting from a certain giantess.

Hel no longer occupied Loki's lap. Instead she got her own seat on the other side of her father.

She watched with great curiosity at Hiccup.

Death was a concept that had a unique way of looking at in Viking mythology. If one died in battle they would live in Valhalla with the gods.

If one died of illness or in bed then they went to Hel.

And Niflhel was reserved for the wicked dead.

If Hiccup died during his fight with the Green Death he was guaranteed a spot in Valhalla. Not even Thor's loudest protests could prevent his entry. Nor Hel's most incessant cries.

What most mortals didn't know that was that death in all its forms were watched over by Hel. Human death was something that interested her greatly.

How people act at the end of their life, what they think, and the reasons to die. The last was her favorite. Humans were such romantic creatures. They lived with such vigor.

But it is in their dying moment they are always defined.

Did they die of old age because they ran from battle or was it because they fought too fiercely? Did their sickness come on from their own stupidity or was it simple bad luck? And in battle, was it because of a swing of an axe that they fell or was there a deeper meaning to their death?

Hel remembered feeling what Hiccup was feeling that day. She felt the emotions run through all of the near dead.

Protective, determined, accepted, friendship. But what puzzled her was that there was a lack of truly overshadowing fear.

Here there was a massive dragon the likes their world had never known, chasing young Haddock with fire bellowing out at him.

And yet fear was hidden. Fear was there but the other emotions seemed to mask it entirely.

Hel could not understand. Hiccup was an outcast like herself. Even worse, disowned by his father. And yet instead of abandoning them to perish like she would have had the gods been there, he rushed in and saved them all.

And the fear, the fear all felt of the unknown was not in Hiccup's mind. She could only remember one like that from recent times. One that died about fourteen years ago.

Hel shook herself out of her thinking and continued on with dinner.

Odin stood. He waited until all attention was given to him. "I think we can all agree that today's events surpassed all expectations and that these champions are truly some of the greatest warriors their world has ever seen."

Some of the more humble champions blushed and accepted the compliment. And then there were normal Vikings.

Vali's champion, Tyr's and even Stolt got up to accept the cheers of the gods. They waved their arms and struck ridiculous poses.

"You haven't even fought yet," Hiccup said just audible enough for Stolt to hear him.

Stolt gave him a disapproving look. "So?" he said. "Somebody on this team has to be polite enough on this team to take a compliment,"

Hiccup just looked away with a smile.

After the cheers died down, Odin regained order and continued. "As a reward," Odin said. "Let us give them a large barrel of mead for celebration tonight,"

There were cheers from both sides.

Loki was losing interest in the announcement and his head began to hang.

Suddenly, Tyr's champion stood. "You might as well give us two Lord Odin," He said. "Because a whole barrel is child's play for me,"

Loki's head shot up. He looked at the man and then at Hiccup with a mischievous smile.

Hiccup looked at Loki. At first he felt apprehensive but then it dawned on him. He smiled back at Loki and nodded.

Loki stood now. "I do believe I've heard a challenge," he said.

Tyr's champion became uncomfortable because on the one hand he wanted to say it was but this was Loki. He could twist the words themselves.

"I believe we can make a new challenge," Loki said. "If it pleases you Father,"

Odin thought it over. He saw where Loki was going with this. "I have no problems with it," Odin said. "As long as Thor has no objections,"

"Krig?" Thor said to Tyr's champion. "Are you truly that good of a drinker?"

Krig proudly smiled and nodded.

Thor then turned back to Loki. "You have yourself a challenge," Thor said. "Pick your champion,"

"Good because I do," Loki said.

There was a silence.

Loki hit his hand against his forehead. "Man you guys are slow," Loki said. "I pick Hiccup alright,"

There was laughter from Thor's side and groans from Loki's.

Heimdall looked over toward his sworn enemy and gave him a confused look.

Loki just gave him his infamous smile.

"Let's get this underway," Odin said.

A small table appeared in the center of the room. There were multiple cups already filled with mead. Hiccup and Krig walked to the tables.

They sat down across from each other. Krig was trying to contain his laughter. How can this kid beat him at drinking?

Odin stood next to the table and began explaining the rules. "You're going drink for drink," Odin said. "First one to refuse a drink, vomit, and/or pass out loses."

They both nodded.

"Begin,"

Krig grabbed a cup and looked at Hiccup. "Let's see if you can even get past the first sip,"

Krig began drinking. He let it slowly fall down his throat, enjoying the honey made beer. He knew that the child was probably spitting out his own.

He put the cup down and his jaw followed suit.

Hiccup sat there with the already finished cup on the table and a smile on his face.

"I'm pretty sure this is a drinking contest not a sipping contest," Hiccup said.

****With Astrid****

Astrid sat in the mead hall with her friends. They weren't depressed but they certainly were unhappy.

They ate dinner nearly in complete silence. Astrid couldn't take it anymore.

"Come on guys," Astrid said. "We can still be happy without Hiccup,"

There was no enthusiasm.

Tuffnut finally agreed. "Yeah," Tuff said. "I mean we survived fourteen years without him and we were perfectly happy then,"

"He was still around though you idiot," Ruffnut said. "We were all just jerks to him,"

"Maybe you were," Tuff said.

"What?" Ruff said. "You were almost as bad as Snotlout!"

Snot flinched at the mention of his former cruelty to his cousin.

"Well what about that time you hung him upside down with a rope and left him there?" Tuff said.

"You did the same thing," Ruffnut said. "Literally the next day. You even beat with a stick,"

The Thorstons were just about to lose it and start going for vital organs when Astrid stopped them. "Guys I said 'happy'," Astrid said. "Not killing each other,"

The two were starting to calm down. But they still had a pretentious hostility between them.

Astrid was normally good at conflict. At least when she had a side.

Conflict resolution, though? Not so much.

Hiccup wake up already. Before we lose a Thorston.

****With Hiccup****

Hiccup placed yet another cup down on the table. Krig uncontrollably let his hand fall to the table with his cup.

"Feeling it yet Kid?" Krig asked smugly even though he was already beginning to slur.

"Sort of," Hiccup replied. While Hiccup may have been holding up better than this violent drunkard but he was far from sober.

"Let's have another round then," Krig yelled.

Hiccup rolled his eyes.

Sure enough another cup of mead appeared. Hiccup took it and drank it down as easy as he had done the others. Try's champion did the same but with more spilling.

At this point just about every god and champion was slack jawed at this spectacle. This kid couldn't weigh much more than a sheep and yet he was out drinking this ox of a man.

****With Toothless****

What in the hell had Hookfang meant? The thought wouldn't leave Toothless' head.

"**Of all the dragons, you should know that's a lie,**"

Maybe she should just mind her own business. Toothless now held a form of fame he never had and he wasn't sure if he liked it or not.

All the dragons looked up to him now. But the Nightmares' feelings of

him barely changed. They constantly were giving him dirty looks or something. But since his rider was so close to hers they had no choice but to see each other.

And as much as they didn't want to admit itâ€| they were becoming friends.

Toothless shook off the thought of being friends with any member of _that_ species.

He was even able to shake off what Hookfang had said.

Toothless looked at the sky. The humans were having their evening meal.

He might as well have his. Ever since the large boy had put his tail fin on for him he had been fishing for himself.

He appreciated the tail fin but he still missed the synchronization with Hiccup's movements and the weight on his back.

"**He better wake up soon,**" Toothless thought out loud.

With Hiccup

Hiccup placed yet another cup down on the table. He was feeling it. He almost never felt it.

At least he still looked conscious. Krig looked as if his body had given up a long time ago.

"This'll be your last round boy," Krig said defiantly.

Hiccup rolled his eyes. "You're right in a way,"

Another round of drinks. Hiccup took his cup and drank it as easily as he had the others.

Krig found himself staring at the boy and then at his own cup. He took the cup. He put it to his mouth and began to drink. He leaned back to make it easier to drink.

You ever lean anywhere when you're wasted beyond belief? Balance is something that tends to fail you. A lot!

Krig fell back onto the floor. The mead fell onto his face. Krig was out cold.

The room was in shock. That man was huge. How could he _not_ have out drank a child? Especially a child the size of Hiccup? Even in those times they could associate size with alcoholic tolerance.

"Well I do believe that's a win for my team," Loki said.

"You had to have cheated," Thor said.

"Please tell me how Thor," Loki said. Thor sat there silent. "I thought so. Now take the defeat with some dignity and get your hammered champion out of here before he vomits everywhere. Sorry I guess it is pretty difficult to be dignified in that kind of

situation,"

Thor wanted so bad to smash him in the face with his hammer. But he held back.

Loki shrugged and looked at his own inebriated champion. "How are you doing?"

Hiccup shrugged. "It takes a lot for me to feel drunk," Hiccup stumbled as he walked to join the other champions. "Then again that was a lot of mead,"

Loki laughed and helped him back to the others.

"Well that was certainly interesting," Odin said. "I don't know if the champions still want the mead,"

There were murmurs.

"But they can have it anyway,"

There was a collective sigh of relief.

The champions began to exit the Hall and head back to their barracks.

Hiccup stumbled slightly. Svartur came up next to him and put his arm over her shoulder and grabbed his waist. "Let's get you back Fishbone," she used the old nickname for Hiccup.

"Thanks, Svartur," Hiccup said.

She rolled her eyes. The smell of mead was all over his breath. "Please refrain from talking until we get there,"

Hiccup made a zipping motion over his mouth.

Loki watched him and his friend exit.

"Okay, how'd you cheat?" Hel asked her father.

"I didn't cheat," Loki said without much care.

"Then how did he beat him? That should not have happened,"

Loki sighed. "I suppose other people are wondering too. But, here's your biology lesson,"

"Bi-what?"

"Let me continue," Loki said. "Okay so you know where the liver is?"

"I've ripped out my fair amount,"

Loki shook his head. What made it creepy was the fact that she was still a "child".

"Goodâ€¦ I guess," Loki said. "The liver is where the alcohol is broken down. It is broken down by something called an 'enzyme'. This

particular enzyme is called alcohol dehydrogenases,"

"What?"

"Alcohol dehydrogenases," Loki said. "They break down the alcohol so the body can continue to function, but it takes awhile to do so,"

"What does this have to do with Hiccup?"

"I'm getting there," Loki said. "In Hiccup's case he has an abundance of this enzyme. Not only was there mutation that caused the over abundance, but his liver even works faster than the normal person,"

"How do you even know all this stuff?" Hel asked still confused.

"I may haveâ€¦ peered into the future once or twice," Loki said.

"Oh," Hel said. She walked away still trying to even pronounce the word 'dehydrogenases'.

"Plus Wikipedia helps," Loki whispered to himself.

****With Hiccup****

"How did you do that?" Adla asked when Hiccup and Svartur finally arrived.

"Well first I took the cup and put it to my mouthâ€¦" Hiccup said.

"Even as a drunk you're a smartass," Adla said.

Hiccup feigned a bow. He didn't stumble remarkably.

"I'm not even sure how you're standing," Svartur thought out loud.

"Neither am I," Hiccup returned. "But I've always been able to drink a lot,"

"You're a freak," Adla said.

"Thank you," Hiccup said. "Touching. I think I have a lump in my throat,"

They laughed at his sarcasm. They then found a group of seats where they could relax.

"Well our team is pissed," Skytt said walking over to the group. "Lofa and Ilska can't believe Hiccup won and I'm sure Krig won't be too pleased when he wakes up,"

"At least I won't have to fight him," Hiccup said relieved.

"Well you're not getting out of anymore fights," Adla said. "I barely even consider that bout with Skytt a fight,"

"Well all I have left is Lofa and you," Hiccup said with a smile.

"And you only have a small chance of winning one of those fights," Adla said with his own smile.

"I beg to differ," Hiccup said.

They both just laughed the false tension away.

"So Ilska's that guy's name?" Svartur asked.

"Yep," Adla said. "You really don't like him,"

"He killed me," Svartur said. "I would have been okay with that if he hadn't made it long and painful. And enjoyed doing so,"

"Yeah but you didn't actually die," Adla said.

"When you have five foot sword impale you and then get lifted up onto it come talk to me about who I have a right to hate,"

"Alright," Skytt said raising his arms. "He's just defending our teammate,"

"Well he can stop now," Svartur said.

There was a silence.

"So how's that arrogant cousin of yours," Adla asked Hiccup in an attempt to move forward.

Hiccup thought the question over for a quick second. "He's not that bad anymore," Hiccup said.

Adla began to laugh and Svartur gave Hiccup a look of absolute bewilderment.

"What do you mean: 'not that bad'?" Svartur asked. "He used to torture you. Torture us,"

"Yeah," Adla said. "I remember him rallying all the other heirs into beating the Hel out of you guys or ridiculing you,"

"He was an asshole," Svartur said.

Hiccup didn't know why he was getting angry but he was. They were right after all. Snot had been one of the cruelest people that Hiccup had ever met. But at the same time he was his cousin. His family. And if there was one thing Stoick had drilled into his head was that family came first.

"Yeah but now he's different," Hiccup said.

They were both about to bring up more of Snot's questionable history but Hiccup stopped them.

"He used to be terrible to me," Hiccup said. "Yeah he was just as bad to you too Svartur but I spent every day with him. If there is one

person in existence that has the right to hate him it's me. And for a long time I did. But not anymore. Now he and I are friends. Everyday we grow closer as family."

"Yeah and all it cost you was a leg," Svartur said.

Hiccup was speechless.

"You may be the loving and forgiving type Hiccup," Svartur said as she stood to leave for her bed. "But, I'm not,"

She stormed away, obviously angry at the idea that her friend who had suffered so much with her was now willing to look past the transgressions of one of the worst of their foes.

"Someone want to explain what just happened?" Skytt asked in utter confusion. Being the only adult in this group he had no connection to anything they were saying.

Hiccup was still looking where Svartur exited. He felt bad for having offended her, but happy he had stood up for his cousin.

Adla sighed and quickly explained how he, Hiccup and Svartur were all Heirs. He then explained how Snotlout had acted through their entire childhood.

"And now you're defending him?" Skytt asked incredulously. "I'd take every shot I could at the guy,"

"Well I don't want to do that," Hiccup said. "Violence almost always leads to more violence and so does stabbing at someone's back,"

"Good point but I mean fourteen years is a long time to forgive," Skytt said.

"Not in the long run," Hiccup said. "The best way for me to enjoy the rest of my life is by not dwelling on the past,"

Skytt and Adla nodded.

Geez I didn't know the kid was such a philosopher. Adla thought.

"I guess I should probably go to bed," Hiccup said as he stumbled to bed.

The two members of Thor's team bit a farewell to their enemy.

"So what's the plan for tomorrow?" Skytt asked.

"We're going to have to challenge Stolt eventually," Adla said. "That's why tomorrow everyone's taking a shot at him,"

"And how are we going to do that?" Skytt asked.

"We'll just ask the gods to send him back to wherever we fight," Adla said. "I'm sure they wouldn't mind,"

Skytt shrugged and tightened the string on his bow. "Just don't make

me go first,"

9. Chapter 9

Hey guys. I can not apologize enough for taking so long. My computer got infected and I lost everything. I was just really crushed. Not to mention I had to deal with a heartbreak, some very personal issues and the arrest of my father. It's just been a rough time lately but now I'm in college and have the time, privacy, and creative spark that left me for so long. For those of you who are still interested I give you the next installment of Battle of Champions. Please enjoy.

* * *

><p>Chapter 9<p>

Hiccup rolled out of bed. His head was pounding, his throat was hoarse and his stomach empty.

"So this is how all of Berk feels after a celebration? " he mumbled. "I don't think I'll be drinking for awhile,"

"Oh don't tell me you're not ready for today Hiccup," Adla said as he stretched his arm across his body.

"How ready do I even have to be?" Hiccup said with smug sarcasm. "It's just your team,"

Adla laughed. "I'll make you eat those words,"

"Honestly," Hiccup said. "They sound delicious. I'm starved,"

"Then quit moping and let's get down to the Hall," Skytt said throwing his bow over his back.

Hiccup and the other champions went to the hall and sat down. Svartur wouldn't even look in Hiccup's direction. I guess some fights go past the final blow.

Loki was still ecstatic from the night before. His champion had out drank Tyr's and in general Loki was pulling ahead in matches. Life was good.

Odin wasn't in much of a ceremonial mood so he after everyone had finished eating he commenced with the day's events.

Hiccup and the other champions found themselves in the same forest they started these last few strange days.

"I'd better get some action today," Stolt said impatiently. "This sideline crap is getting boring. I know I'm intimidating and all but Thor's champion should really man up,"

"You don't want to fight him Stolt," Hiccup said.

"Yeah?" Stolt said slightly annoyed. "And why's that Runt?"

"I grew up with him," Hiccup said as he drifted back to his

childhood. "Adla is one of those guys with war in his blood. He's not a brute but a cunning and strategic mind with an agile but strong body. He is deadly. He first killed someone when he was ten."

At that everyone perked up. What ten year old had the ability to kill someone?

Hiccup sighed. He looked up at everyone. "The worst part was it was for my sake,"

****With Astrid****

Astrid no longer wanted to get out of bed. To go through another day with her friends bickering and her boyfriend mysteriously out cold. Life was getting way too weird way too fast.

She couldn't believe how much she could miss one person.

That one person who makes you feel at peace even when the world around you is in absolute chaos. That one person who makes you feel strong when you're weak. The person who showed you what actual love is.

A small tear escaped her eye. She was so sick of feeling so disgustingly weak.

"He's one freaking person that I didn't even acknowledge a year ago," Astrid said in an effort to comfort herself. It didn't work. Now she thought of what life would be like had she paid him the attention he always deserved.

Hiccup made her happier than anyone else. She had never been so happy other than now. She could've been happy for so long. But she was superficial like all the other villagers.

But like any stubborn Viking she pushed herself past this feeling. _Maybe today will be the day._

And maybe not.

****With Hiccup****

Hiccup was getting ready to explain the story when Krig marched out onto the field. His hangover gone as the field gave all champions a fresh feeling and put them at their best.

I shouted "Get out here Stolt!"

Stolt smiled. "Finally!"

He didn't hesitate. He bolted from the forest and charged like a warrior toward Krig. Krig made a stand with his massive sword. He swung to take Stolt's head, but Stolt blocked with his shield and without breaking stride brought down his axe on Krig's trapezius.

Krig was finished before he even had the time to start. He fell to his knees still somewhat alive Stolt stopped and turned. He looked at his axe. He smiled and just threw the mighty axe into Krig's back. He fell to the ground and died.

Stolt retrieved his axe and walked back to the forest.

Hiccup, like all his teammates, were astonished at what just happened. They knew Stolt was good but that was pure Viking skill.

****With Adla****

"Forget that!" Skytt said. "Did you see that?" he asked Adla.

"He's good," Adla said with a grin on his face. "I'll give him that,"

"The only thing I want to give him is space," Skytt said.

"That's why you're a bowman," Adla said. "Rurik! You're next!"

Tyr's champion steadied himself and marched onto the field.

****With Hiccup****

"Gotta hand it to you Son," Finkaren said to Stolt as he returned. "You are one hell of a warrior,"

"Thank you," Stolt said remarkably humbly.

Vakker brushed her hair aside and said: "So what island are you from again?"

Vikings. Because killing someone quickly and making it look easy is a turn on. What a society.

Stolt just smiled but before he could answer...

"I challenge Heimdall's champion," Rurik shouted.

"Two in one day?" Stolt said pleased. "I must just be lucky."

Stolt charged the field again. Rurik was ready though. The two met and exchanged blows. Axe to shield and shield to hammer.

The two seemed somewhat matched but Stolt was still so at ease. Rurik fought hard and his guard was rigid.

Stolt found an opening and punched Ruruik in the face. The man went down and Stolt said "That was showing such disrespect to an elder,"

"I'm not that old," Finkaren said. "I'm not," he insisted to the awkwardly silent group.

Rurik got up and again attacked Stolt. Stolt dropped his axe and pulled a knife from his belt. He blocked Rurik's swing with his shield and drove the knife into the man's chest.

Rurik fell gripping to Stolt's tunic until he hit the ground and died. Stolt retrieved his knife and and axe and once again went to return.

****With Adla****

"I'm getting this over with," Skytt said leaving the forest. "Hey Dumbass!"

Stolt looked to Skytt.

"Catch!"

Skytt let an arrow go straight for Stolt. Stolt held his shield up and dodged for good measure. The arrow hit the Eart right where he had been standing.

"I think that's challenge enough," Skytt said.

****With Loki****

"There's no way you're getting three Heimdall," Thor said.

"We'll see," Heimdall replied still intent on watching the fight.

"What happened to you?" Thor said with a disgusted look.

Heimdall looked up.

"You align yourself with him?" Thor said with even greater disgust. "A trickster. A traitor..."

"Your brother," Heimdall interrupted. "Maybe what happened to me was that I wanted to save us all from having to die unnecessarily. Maybe I came to my senses and realized I didn't want to treat him like an outsider anymore. And maybe you should start treating him like a brother instead of a bother,"

Heimdall did not speak much but when he did people listened and when he had a lot to say it meant it was important. Everyone was silent as Heimdall continued to stare at a now speechless Thor.

He sat down and returned to watching the fight. Heimdall did likewise.

Loki was touched. He didn't know what to say to his associate. But he did know what to say to his friend.

"Thank you," Loki said as he continued to gaze at the fire.

Heimdall allowed himself a rarity. He smiled.

****With Stolt****

Stolt took a third arrow to his shield. Damn Skytt was accurate. But Stolt was a good warrior. He dodged and held his shield right and he was gradually closing the distance to Skytt.

Skytt was trying his best to keep the space between them great but Stolt knew how to keep him from getting away. He couldn't break into a full retreat.

Skytt fired arrows like a madman trying to stop the advancing threat.

Finally he was there. Skytt pulled out his daggers and dodged as Stolt swung his axe at him. Skytt attacked with his daggers but Stolt blocked with his shield.

Stolt swung his axe for his head but Skytt rolled out of the way to safety. Skytt was on the defensive he rolled and dodged and avoided Stolt's axe. Skytt saw an opening and took it. He stabbed at Stolt's stomach.

Stolt dodged slightly but the dagger still sank into his right side. Skytt went to retrieve it but Stolt grabbed his arm with his shield arm as he had just dropped it. He would not let Skytt pull away. Stolt quickly punched the man repeatedly and let him drop the ground. Skytt went to crawl away but Stolt was fast. He brought his axe down right on the back of Skytt's knee. Severing it.

Skytt howled in pain. Stolt gripped the knife in his side and with a quick tug pulled it out and tossed it aside.

He then walked up to Skytt who was still in immeasurable suffering and ended it. He decapitated him.

****With Adla****

"You want next Lofa?" Adla asked still grinning at the match.

"He just killed three of our champions Adla!" She shouted. "Why are you grinning?"

"Just get out there," he ordered. "Try not to make it too short,"

Lofa was angry, fuming even but she obeyed her order.

****With Stolt****

Obviously they wanted him. They wanted to get him done with. He now saw Skytt disappear and his own wound heal. Which could only mean the next champion had arrived. He didn't even hesitate. He turned and chucked his axe.

It buried itself right into Lofa's chest.

She fell and Stolt now had four wins. He retrieved his axe and walked away. He was nearly out halfway back to his side when he felt eyes on him.

He turned and saw Adla staring at him.

"You're last huh?" Stolt asked.

No response.

"It's about time you stop sending the rest to fight for you,"

Adla took a few calm steps toward Stolt taking out his own axe in the process.

"So straight to fighting," Stolt said.

The two met and began to clash. Adla was fast and strong. Stolt found himself unable to be as calm as he had with the other opponents. Adla was the one who seemed somewhat relaxed. He was taking Stolt seriously but he seemed to be holding back

Finally, Adla began to swing more ferociously and faster. Stolt could barely keep up. Adla rolled underneath a strike from Stolt and struck his leg with his axe. Stolt went for another attack but Adla blocked and kicked Stolt to the ground.

Adla brought his axe down on Stolt but he managed to block with his shield. He then swung his axe for Adla's foot but Adla simply lifted his foot and brought it down on the axe pinning it to the floor.

Adla withdrew his axe and brought it down again and again on Stolt's shield until he finally couldn't hold it up anymore. Adla drove his axe into Stolt's chest. Stolt died and Thor's team took on one victory.

10. Chapter 10

****Good to be writing again. Read review and enjoy!****

* * *

><p>Chapter 10<p>

Adla stared back at the enemy forest eerily. Chills went right up Hiccup's spine. Adla hadn't lost his touch. Hiccup instinctively put his hand to his sword. He needed something to hold that would make him feel confident.

"He's scary good," Svartur said. "We can't beat that,"

"Then we'll just have to win every other match," Hiccup said still staring at his eventual opponent and fellow heir. "Make his wins count for nothing,"

Even though trees stood in the way Adla still managed to pierce the forest with his stare and it was aimed right at Hiccup. His gaze was plain but it said something. It said "This will be you."

Hiccup was even more scared.

What if he carries this feeling back to Midgard?

****With Loki****

Thor proudly gazed at Heimdall. Adla's victory surely would shut Heimdall up and numb his comments.

"I can't say I'm surprised," Thor said.

"He did his best and won four times," Heimdall said showing no concern at all. "To ask for five would be too much. You're still down by as many wins,"

Thor was silenced again.

The champions appeared.

"My, what great fights," Odin said. "Good work especially to Stolt who proved himself a noble warrior with four victories. You are all given a reprieve for the day,"

The champions were dismissed. They all headed back to the barracks.

Thor's team didn't want to talk much about the fights so Rurik decided he would start bragging about something else.

"I am by far the fastest Viking in my village," he boasted. "Maybe the fastest Viking ever,"

"I would really beg to differ," Svartur murmured.

"What was that witch?" Krig asked angrily.

Hiccup turned at the insult and had his sword at Krig's throat.

"What did I say about that name?" Hiccup said through clenched teeth.

"Put it down," Lofn said resting her own spear on Hiccup's throat.

"All of you stop acting like children," Adla commanded. Because pointing weapons at each other's throats is what Viking children did.

No one really wanted to argue after his display today. They all just dropped their arms.

"Now what was it that you said Svartur?" Adla asked calmly.

"I disagreed with Rurik," Svartur said. "I think I'm faster than him,"

"Well then why don't we just find out?" Adla said.

"Yes!" Loki said as he appeared. "You guys are making your own challenges!" he exclaimed as he grabbed Krig by the tunic and shook him. "I'm so proud! Isn't this great?!"

Loki had a crazed look in his eye and all Krig could do was nervously smile and nod.

"You gotta lighten up Chuckles," Loki said as he released Krig. "Okay a normal foot race is boring. But for some reason it's the coolest thing over in Greece,"

"Where?" Skytt asked.

"Doesn't matter," Loki said waving off the question. "I have a much more exciting plan." He snapped his finger and a trail started to grow from where he stood into a field. The trail spanned about two hundred yards. And then other things appeared. Trees shot out of the

ground and then fell right onto the path creating an obstacle.

Next a few yards after them the ground sank in and filled with water. The only way across were large angled stones on each side of the pool. Each one separated from each other.

Then came a pit with spikes at the bottom. The only way across were long poles with a flat top that made a path to the other side.

"That looksâ€¦" Rurik started nervously.

"Fun!" Svartur exclaimed.

"Excellent," Loki said. "Take your places,"

Rurik and Svartur took their places in a starting position.

Loki stood between them.

"On your mark," he said. "Get setâ€¦ Goat!" both lurched forward "Ha! Gotcha both!"

"Really?!" Rurik said.

"Grow a sense of humor," Loki said. "This is why I don't like Thor. He has lame friends." Loki began again. "On your markâ€¦ Get setâ€¦ GO!"

The two shot off for the trail.

****With Astrid ****

Both she and Snotlout decided that staying with Hiccup was just taking its toll on their psyches so they decided today they would give themselves a break.

Astrid spent the day with Ruffnut. The two looked for things to do. They settled on relaxing on the docks. Astrid looked out on the endless sea.

"Hey that ship looks like it's sinking," Ruffnut said.

Sure enough out at sea a merchant ship had struck a rock and looked ready to sink. Astrid finally had something to do. She bolted to her feet and turned to run to get Stormfly just as she landed right in front of her.

Landing next to her was Tuff on the Zippleback. "We saw it from the cliffs," he said. Just then Snot and Fish flew over head rushing to the ship. "Let's go!"

Asrtrid jumped right up onto her Nadder and Ruffnut onto her head of the Zippleback. They took to the sky and rushed to sea.

****With Hiccup****

To say they both shot off on the trail would be an exaggeration. Rurik shot off and hit Svartur to the ground in the process.

Well Svartur was pissed off and got right back up and began a sprint

to catch the jerk.

He made it to the trees and slowed down. He started picking his way through the branches that were still attached to the tree that lay in the path.

Size really sucks sometimes.

Svartur barely broke stride. She hurled herself at the branches and climbed through them effortlessly. Then she jumped from the one downed tree to the next and then the next. Rurik was barely over the first.

Next Svartur sprinted for the pond with the rocks. She reached it just as Rurik made it out of the trees. He found himself in shock. He couldn't believe she was moving so fast. He began to try and catch up.

It was useless.

She hit the rocks and bounced off them flawlessly. She flipped and spun and made it look as graceful as a Nadder flying.

She landed on the other side of the pond and continued running toward the next obstacle.

Rurik jumped to the first stone and clung to it. Then he jumped to the next. He couldn't move anywhere near as fast as she had through the obstacle.

Svartur hit the next obstacle running. She jumped one footed past three of the poles and then dove for the fourth. She landed on her hands and brought the rest of her body above her ending in a handstand facing the direction she came from.

"What's wrong Rruik?" she shouted. "Can't keep up?"

Rurik was infuriated by the taunt.

He finished the second obstacle and sprinted for the third.

Svartur righted herself and made for the end of the obstacle. She lightened her pace and relaxed her body.

Rurik made it to the next obstacle. He jumped to each pole one by one. He stopped to balance himself on each. He jumped nervously and nearly missed the end. He had to pull himself out of the pit and run to try and catch Svartur who was running significantly slower.

Rurik was breathing heavy but he saw that he could beat the girl. She must've burned up all that energy on those snotty flips and fancy running.

"Looks like all those tricks don't mean anything in the end," he shouted catching up to her.

Without even turning she said: "No, they don't. I just wanted it to be close,"

Suddenly Svartur broke into a sprint that Rurik never thought

possible by any person. She moved over the landscape like the shadow of a bird.

She reached the end and started breathing heavily but enjoyed her victory. Rurik made it in about twenty seconds later panting like a dog in the sun.

Loki's team celebrated Svartur.

Five up for Loki.

****With Astrid****

Astrid and the others rushed atop their dragons for the ship.

"Okay," Snotlout yelled over the wind. "Everyone go for the ships and pick whoever you can,"

"What?!" Astrid yelled. "We need a plan,"

"That is a plan," Snotlout yelled back.

"A crappy one!"

"Who asked you?!"

"Any reasonable minded person!"

"_Enough!_" Fishlegs yelled. "Astrid! Secure a perimeter and make sure there isn't anyone who drifted away from the boat! Ruff! Tuff! Take care of the crew on and around the boat! Your dragon is the largest! Snot! Support the Thorstons! Anyone they can't take you take! I'll round up the ones drifting away from the center!"

No one moved. Everyone was shocked at how Fish of all people took initiative.

"Well?" Fish said with urgency. "Go!"

Shaking themselves out of their shock the gnag bolted into action. Astrid shot off to circle about two miles around the ship. The Thorstons and Snot aimed right for the boat. Fish went in right behind them.

Fish had to take the initiative because this was a boat sinking. These were sailors like him. He couldn't let them drown.

Especially since he wanted to know what happened.

The dragon war was over, this far out there were no rocks, and it was a clear day. Something was really up.

****With Hiccup****

"That was awesome Svartur," Hiccup said. "Where'd you learn to do that?"

"The forge was your escape," she replied. "The forest was mine,"

They were back in the barracks and relaxing after today's events. Hiccup saw her point. Outcasts had a way of coping with loneliness. They became good at something.

For Hiccup it was learning to make weapons and for Svartur it was running.

"Svartur," Adla said approaching the two. "That was amazing,"

"Thanks," she said.

"How'd you become so surefooted?" he asked.

"I ran at night when no one was around. I would run until I had to go home and collapse,"

"Wow," Adla said impressed.

"It kept me in good shape," Svartur said. "But it had its downfalls," She became slightly solemn.

"Like what?" Hiccup asked.

"Ever wonder why people assume I'm a witch?" Svartur asked. "People would look out their windows at night and see me running by into the forest. People always make assumptions,"

She turned away from them.

"Assumptions are stupid Svartur," Hiccup said. "Things will change soon. I promise,"

"Thanks Hic," she said feeling slight comfort in Hiccup's confident assurance.

He was always such a good friend.

****With the gods****

"You can give this up now Thor," Loki said.

"I'm not going to give you that satisfaction," Thor said angrily.

"What satisfaction?" Loki returned.

The two were alone. A few miles from Valhalla.

"I want our fighting to end Brother," Loki continued. "Not out of my own selfish desire for victory but out of concern and awareness that we can both be happy,"

"You still hold onto that idea that Ragnarok won't come to pass," Thor said with a smile. "Something so epic and legendary will not be prevented by some scrawny child that killed some monster,"

"That was a major event that has the potential to change Midgard as a whole,"

"Midgard!" Thor exclaimed. "This is Asgard. What do the events of humans have to do with us gods?"

"If that's how you feel then why is it so important for Hiccup to die? Why can't he be a champion? Why do you hate him so much if you claim not to care for Midgard?"

Thor had no response. This whole fight was based on the fact the Thor hated what Hiccup had done to the balance.

"If you think Midgard doesn't affect us," Loki continued. "Then why was your initial argument for Hiccup's execution because he had disrupted the balance? It doesn't add up Thor!"

"All that has to add up are my victories," Thor said coldly. "All I have to prove is that I am still the mightier brother,"

"Thorâ€| "

"No!" he said. "This is your power grab to take Asgard! Try and make me into the villain! Win favor and then strike down everyone! Well I won't let you and yourâ€| yourâ€|_brood_ of little monsters end us! The only change in the story of Ragnarok is that I will kill Jorgamundr, I will save Father from Fenrir and after all is done I will take the head of your daughter Loki. I will take it and hang it in Valhalla. Hang it as a warning to all who stand against the reign of the gods. But youâ€|you don't get death. I will leave you tied back up to your stone to rot again. But added to your torture will be the knowledge that your children be dead and you could not save them."

Loki was a cold, manipulative, and cunning god but at this moment he had no words for what his _brother_ had just said.

"Well what do you think of that?" Thor asked. He wanted the fear. He wanted his brother to show that he was intimidated.

Loki regained himself.

"In this world and all the worlds there will always exist violence and hatred. That cannot be changed unfortunately. Two differing opinions will cause tension which will cause resent which leads to hurt which leads to violence and then annihilation. Or a being or group will vie for power and ultimately cause a family to be ripped to shreds. But what is the worst about this is that even when an option of peace is presented one side is so set at war they can't see the alternative. So instead of letting a grudge and a prophecy guide your decisions you should look inward and realize that there is an option of peace being presented to you. I hope that you don't throw it away."

With that Loki turned and left Thor who stood without argument.

Loki thought though as he left. Thor's cold threats lingered in his ears. He pictured his serpent son struck down by lightning and beaten to death by Thor's hammer. He envisioned his wolf son being given no more mercy and being killed by the combined power of Odin and Thor. He finally thought of Thor mounting the severed head of his daughter,

who even now was trying to live a better life, in the Great Hall and all the gods smiling about it.

Loki let all this fill his head and for the first time in a long, long time he cried. Even when he had been tortured he had not let out a tear but now the God of Trickery was reduced to tears thinking about the fate of his children at the hands of his brother.

To him that was much more torturous.

11. Chapter 11

****I'm really sorry about being so erratic about my posts but I'm gonna try and get more into it. I think I'm gonna try and wrap this one up to continue on. At least this sets up a sort of mystery for the next story. Enjoy! (If any of my old readers even still follow this story) ****

* * *

><p>With Hiccup

With Loki's team up by five Hiccup enjoyed the night peacefully. Well peaceful as in no fighting, no drinking contests, no sudden arrivals of the "divine" type. However, Hiccup's mind was not at peace. His thoughts were of Midgard.

He thought of Toothless, of Astrid, of his father and friends. But he forced his thoughts out of his head as best as he could. He had a competition to win.

Adla.

The guy was scary good. He was a powerful warrior, a charismatic leader and a strategist in the same league as Hiccup. How could Hiccup compete against that?

If there was anyone who embodied the Viking people and went above and beyond it was him.

Hiccup was the lucky cripple from Berk.

He turned over in bed.

I mean he's no Queen Dragon.

****Next Morning****

The gods and their champions assembled in Valhalla for breakfast.

If there was one good thing about this experience it was the food. Hiccup could not get enough of this food. No wonder the gods lived here.

Loki seemed less talkative than normal. His daughter was beginning to sense the difference too. She sat on the opposite side of her father.

Hel poked his side and said in the most mature voice she had used

since she had arrived in Valhalla: "Is everything okay?"

"Everything will be fine," Loki said with distraction still evident in his voice.

"Why isn't it now?"

"When have things ever been for us Child?" Loki responded. "But they will be,"

Hel brushed off her father's cryptic tone and continued to eat her breakfast.

"This tournament has been fun!" Thor suddenly announced. "And even though my team is losing quite badly right now I'd like to invoke a match to end it all,"

There was silence in the hall. Waiting for a response from Loki.

"Now why would I accept your last ditch effort at a shallow victory?" Loki responded in a disgusted tone. Thor was trying to weasel and connive his way out of a loss. Weaselling and conniving were his things.

"Because it would be more exciting," Thor said playing at his brother's pride and anger. "And let's be honest, this entire tournament was just a brotherly feud. So let's end it with our champions. Three challenges. Best man takes it for their team."

Hiccup shifted uncomfortably in his chair. Fighting Adla once would be enough to scare him but three times would be torture.

"And I'm guessing you'd pick the challenges," Loki said still skeptical.

"I pick one and you pick one," Thor said. "And Father picks the final one. If there is a final one," The last part being as arrogant as godly possible.

_Think you can beat him? _Loki's voice asked in Hiccup's head.

In single combat, no. Marksmanship yes. A third challenge it depends. Hiccup responded.

So you wanna gamble it?

Might as well.

"You're on," Loki said. "What will be the fir-"

"Single Combat," Thor said with a grin.

"How expected and predictable," Loki replied.

"Very good," Odin said intervening. "Let us begin with Single Combat,"

Hiccup and his group were without warning brought to the forest they

had met in for the past few days.

"Are you sure about this?" Stolt said. "We can beat them out,"

"We could," Hiccup agreed. "Or I can beat him now. This is why Thor called us all here. We're the two champions. So let me end this,"

With that Hiccup exited the forest and loaded his crossbow. "Come on Adla!" Hiccup shouted. "Let's see if you can live up to the hype."

Adla stepped out with a grin on his face like this was all just a game. "You're sure you wanna be embarrassed this badly?" Adla shouted back.

"What's worse? A weakling being beaten badly by a hero? Or a hero being beaten at all by a weakling?"

Adla's smile stayed on. "I guess we'll have to find out,"

With that Adla began his charge and no later did Hiccup release his first shot. Adla narrowly dodged it. Adla was used to dodging knives and arrows but these bolts that Hiccup fired were faster and smaller. It made it harder to predict where they would land.

Hiccup released another as Adla crossed halfway Hiccup fired again. This time Adla blocked it with his shield.

Hiccup furiously reloaded and fired three more times. Two caught Adla's shield and one missed. Adla drew nearer looking as clam and determined as ever. His near holy blood boiling at the taste of battle.

It was now that Hiccup remembered his own noble blood. Stoick the Vast, a feared warrior among all Vikings would be disgusted if his boy showed fear to any man even a future leader of the Vordad.

He didn't show fear in the face of certain death against a mountain of scales and fiery death. Adla wasn't much older than him. And an axe is not a monster no matter how it is used. It is steel and a man is flesh and blood bound by bone.

Hiccup remembered that Odin would not kill him regardless of the outcome. But now Hiccup found himself feeling something he hadn't felt in months.

He felt the need to prove himself. To his enemies, to his allies and to the gods themselves. He would show them that he wasn't someone to be taken lightly. Not anymore.

He was the Slayer of the Queen Dragon, The Ender of the War, The Rider of the Night Fury and Heir to the Chiefdom of Berk. He was someone now whether Thor believed it or not.

But just as the gods of Asgard forced those of Midgard to obey them so would he force Thor to respect him.

****With Astrid****

With all the sailors saved the previous day Berk gave them somewhere to stay until arrangements could be made to bring them to their homes in Trenk.

After a day to rest and recuperate from the traumatic disaster the teens took up questioning the men on board. As they had discovered there were no casualties among the sailors.

"So you guys are Vordad?" Ruffnut asked.

"Aye," the captain of the ship said. "We were on course to your island to trade some of our stag meat,"

Stag was a rarity in Berk so it was quite the delicacy.

"What happened?" Astrid asked.

"Iâ€¦don't know. At least not for certain."

"Well what do you think happened?" Astrid asked.

"Dragons," came the response.

"That can't be right," Snotlout said. "That War is over,"

"Maybe the dragons didn't get that memo," the man replied. "Aye, we haven't seen a raid in the months since your Heir's famed battle with the Dragon Queen but I know what I sawâ€¦I just don't see how it's possible."

"What do you mean?" Tuffnut asked.

"How could a dragon sneak onto my ship and eat through our supply of stag before I had seen it?"

None of the teens had an answer.

"After I had discovered it, it suddenly burst right through the bottom of the hull and into the Ocean,"

"Why didn't theâ€¦dragonâ€¦kill any of your men in the water?" Fishlegs asked.

"I guess it was full on stag," the captain replied. "Lucky for us,"

Astrid wasn't convinced. "What happened in the days leading up to the wreck?"

The captain thought. "Not much. We had departed three days ago. There was a strange omen before we left but that doesn't explain it,"

"What was the omen?" Astrid asked.

"That is business of the Vordad Chiefdom," one of the other sailors in the room said defensively.

The captain nodded before the teens could continue. "It is true. Forgive us but that is our business,"

"Fine," Astrid said. "Continue."

"Well a day after we left we picked up a weary outcast on a rowboat,"

"What tribe was he from?"

"Don't know. Didn't ask. I didn't even see his face. He had it covered in a hood and mask. He said he was very sickly. He was travelling with a small box on his back. He was aboard no longer than a night. We gave him a ride to an uninhabited island that he said he could make a life on. And then the next day we were in sight of Berk. I can't believe the rumors are true about the dragons. Where is the mighty Queen Slayer?"

"Hooligan business," Ruffnut said snidely.

"Fair enough,"

"Do you think it's possible that the outcast is somehow responsible?" Astrid asked.

"I don't see how that's possible. This dragon was large enough to feel cramped in my ship. No way it fit in that box."

There was a short moment without any talking. Then Snot took initiative.

"Everyone leave except Astrid and the captain," Snot ordered with authority.

Everyone left without a word. Astrid was even short of a response to Snot's sudden serious demeanor.

"We want to know what that omen was," Snot said after the last person left.

"We told you it's the business of the Vordad Chiefdom," the captain responded.

"But we're entitled to know," Snot said in a matter of fact tone.

Astrid and the man gave him confused looks.

"If one Chiefdom is in danger it is the duty of any other to come to their defense if needed. Or something like that. I was never good at studying the pacts and laws of the nobles."

"And you're both noble?"

Snot nodded.

"I am Snotlout Haddock son of Spitelout of Berk. Rider of the Monstrous Nightmare and Second Heir to the Hairy Hooligans."

"Okay," the captain said convinced. "But what about her?" he asked pointing to Astrid.

Astrid silently hoped he wouldn't be dumb enough to make her his wife for this lie.

"Oh her? She's my cousin's wife. Astrid Haddock."

Astrid was relieved she wasn't his wife but still felt odd being called Hiccup's. And then she got a little mad that her introduction wasn't as grand as his but then again she didn't have the titles he did. It was a noble thing to have titles before you were an adult.

"Oh." He said. "Alright I'll tell ya. The day we left Chief Klok was distraught. That man is never distraught. He said something about his son not waking up in the morning."

At that Snot and Astrid exchanged glances.

"The boy is healthy like an ox. There's no reasonable explanation for it."

"Well I think that satisfies me." Snot said. "How about you Astrid?"

"Yep. I'm good." She replied in a sudden hurry to get the man out of the room.

As soon as he was gone the two showed looks of absolute bewilderment.

"So it's happened to Adla too," Snot said.

"Adla?" Astrid asked. "Like the Adla? Heir to the Vordad?"

"Well yeah he said the Chief's son," Snot said.

"I know but doesn't Klok have other sons?"

Snot shook his head.

"A rumor started by fishermen. Why? I have no idea. But Adla is an only child to a very old father,"

"But that doesn't explain the 'dragon' that got on board the ship,"

"No but it shows that Hiccup isn't an isolated incident,"

The two worried for Hiccup and what he may be doing. But they also worried was going on, on the other islands of the Vikings.

But a fear struck them as the worst was that of a mysterious 'dragon' that was untrained and may be out for blood.

12. Chapter 12

I really hope this battle excites and the short scene with Astrid and Fishlegs gets some readers thinking about events back in Midgard. Enjoy!

* * *

><p>With Hiccup

Hiccup loosed his sixth and final shot at Adla before he was on him. Adla had ducked with little space to spare. Hiccup was left with the only option that he had hoped to avoid. He had to engage one of the most skilled Vikings in all the islands.

Adla came at him with vicious downward strike which Hiccup dodged to his left. Hiccup engaged the blade in his crossbow and swung it upward for Adla. He backed away with ease.

Adla now brought his axe across on a back hand swing for Hiccup's abdomen. Hiccup now was the one backing from the strike.

Adla was fast and didn't wait for a retaliation. He swung for Hiccup again and again. Hiccup being quick on his feet managed to dodge all the blows. Even though Hiccup's retreating defense kept him from death it gave little opening for a counter. Not to mention Adla's guard seemed near impregnable.

Hiccup kept dodging and retreating until he backed away and Adla didn't follow.

"Geez I finally understand how you've stayed alive so long," Adla said in a lighthearted tone. He still saw this is as friendly dual between distant allies. "You are damned fast. If Stoick is the Vast you are certainly the Quick,"

"Umâ€¦thanks," Hiccup said. "I guess they could call you Adla the Honorable,"

Adla nodded his head at the returned compliment. "If you'd like you can put that crossbow down and we can see how good you are with a sword."

"So much for showmanship," Hiccup said in his usual deadpan.

"I think you fighting would be a better show than you running,"

Hiccup shrugged. "You'd be surprised how entertaining a cat chasing a mouse can be," Hiccup loaded the crossbow and placed it on the ground but kept his small quiver on his back and fastened the cover to keep the bolts in place. He drew his sword and his shield. Hiccup sighed. "Well let's see if this will be more entertaining."

Adla just smiled and resumed his assault.

Adla hailed blows of all directions toward Hiccup but Hiccup dodged them all and absorbed the ones he could with his shield. But even with his sword out he still couldn't mount any sort of counter-offensive. Adla was too fast, too strong and too unrelenting.

But every dragon has a weakness and every Viking a flaw. Spotting it was the difficult part. And exploiting it the near impossible.

****With Astrid****

"Astrid!"

Astrid turned to see Fishlegs running after her.

"Hey Fish," She said. "What is it?"

The large boy had to take a small moment to regain his breath and composure. When he did he spoke.

"I was talking to some of the crewmembers that actually saw this dragon,"

"Andâ€|" Astrid said wondering where this could be going.

"It's not like any in the Book of Dragons," Fish blurted. "No description they gave matched any sort of dragon we know of,"

"So it's an undiscovered species," Astrid said brushing off the concern in Fishlegs' voice.

"I thought that too untilâ€|"

"Until what?" Astrid asked with her curiosity peeked.

"Until I visualized what they saw and realized we had seen it before,"

"What are you talking about? You _just_ said that it's like no dragon we've ever seen before."

"Exactly no _dragon._" Fishlegs said with enthusiasm as his point was so close to being made. "It was long, slimy looking with fangs but no arms or legs. It had eyes that wanted only death and didn't have the look of ferocity and purpose that a dragon does. What do we know that matches that?"

Astrid took a moment. And then with a look of a strange mixture between terror and confusion she said: "No."

Fishlegs nodded grimly.

They were gonna need Hiccup

****With Hiccup****

Adla wouldn't stop. The guy was like war itself and it was all being waged on Hiccup. Hiccup didn't understand how he was keeping up with the larger boy.

Hiccup thought that Adla was holding back but the look of confusion on his face told him that Adla was trying his hardest.

Maybe it was Hiccup's skill as a swordsman or his will to survive. Whatever _it_ was it kept Adla's axe from Hiccup's body which was good enough for him.

Hiccup was growing tired of being on the defensive but there was still no sign of weakness or vulnerability on Adla's part.

An idea.

What if being on the run has focused him all on killing me?

Adla swung high and Hiccup ducked and without bothering for second thought stabbed toward Adla. The Vordad tried to dodge it but he was just too late. Hiccup struck the larger boy's right pectoral.

Adla backed up clutching the wound.

"First blood," Adla said impressed. "About time someone made it."

"Sorry to keep you waiting," Hiccup said trying his best to sound as cool tempered as his opponent.

Adla began attacking again.

What is this guy made of?

The dual continued but now with Hiccup showing some life and striking back nut with Adla blocking them all.

Hiccup struck out and Adla met his sword with his own axe. The force dashed Hiccup's sword back from the direction it came from and with the opening Adla kicked the Hooligan backward and onto the ground.

Adla brought his axe down toward Hiccup who rolled over to his stomach and stumble forward shield and all to create distance between himself and Adla. But Adla pursued.

Hiccup once again found himself on a desperate defensive.

He turned around just in time to block one of Adla's strike but his second Hiccup was less fortunate.

Hiccup took a slashing wound to his left side. It stung like Hel and Hiccup could feel his blood run down his torso and leg.

Adla and Hiccup were both bleeding now but they fought on. Their fatigue was now beginning to show. Adla broke Hiccup's defenses and punched the smaller boy square in the face. But, by some miracle Hiccup didn't fall down. And then Adla's shield was shouldered into Hiccup and that sent him to the ground.

Maybe it was luck or coincidence that Hiccup landed right next to his loaded crossbow. Without thought Hiccup grabbed at it with is left hand, dropping his sword, and fired right at Adla. Hiccup didn't aim it and only had the one hand to fire it with so it was lucky he hit anything. The bolt buried itself in Adla's calf.

Adla felt the pain but ignored it and tried to end this fight. He swung over his head and down for Hiccup. Hiccup covered himself with his shield and as Adla's axe dug into the wood Hiccup used the remaining force he had to push the shield over him and back to its lying position from where it came to protect him.

With this movement it dragged Adla with his axe and since his one leg

now felt the pain of an arrow in his muscle and sinew Adla stumbled forward toward Hiccup. Hiccup leaned up with all his might and drew his knife from his belt and dug it into Adla's stomach and then withdrew it and did so again until Adla stopped his hand and beat Hiccup's head with his fists.

Adla wrestled the knife from Hiccup despite his wounds and aimed to drive it through Hiccup's heart. Hiccup had managed to free his right hand from his shield and with his left caught Adla's arm and tried like Hel to keep that knife out of his chest. But Adla began to overpower. And then without warning Hiccup found his force pushing Adla's arms away from his chest.

In reality Adla had pulled his arms back and tried again to strike at Hiccup's heart. This time with the initial force and Adla's superior strength the Hiccup's own knife found itself inside its owners heart.

Hiccup felt the cold iron in his heart which was now stopping its rushed beating. Hiccup felt colder than he had in a long time. His eyes watered and the last thing he saw was an exhausted and pained expression on Adla's face.

****With the gods****

There was a deafening silence in Valhalla. No one could gather the correct words for what they had just witnessed. Hiccup had fought more valiantly than anyone, even Loki had wagered he would have.

The battle should have lasted about as long as a Nightmare fighting a sheep.

But no it lasted as long as it did with Hiccup showing he was no pushover. Even in the face of certain defeat he would fight until the bitter end.

Even Thor looked on in a reverent silence for the bravery this child just showed against his own champion.

****Loki's Team****

"I'll be damned," Stolt said. "That boy's got the fury of a thousand dragon's burning in him. He's gonna be a leader of men and slayer of evil. That's for damn sure,"

"I wonder how long until halls are filled with songs about both of them," Finkaren thought aloud.

"Well however long it is, it won't be soon enough," Vakker said.

How long until it goes to their heads? Svartur worried in silence.

13. Chapter 13

****This end the tournament with two more rounds with Adla and Hiccup. So the chapter after this should wrap it up send everyone back to Earth to continue with the story. I hope you enjoy even though the**

second challenge is a little anti-climactic.**

* * *

><p>With Hiccup

Hiccup reappeared in Valhalla surrounded by the gods all of whom had new looks on their face. Looks of respect from some and shock from others.

Thor, in a failed attempt to come off in his usual arrogant self, began to speak. "Well that's one victory for me. Maybe you should've waited me out Brother,"

He was met with silence from the gods.

"Maybe I should've," Loki said with a small smile. "But that was a grand fight. Such ferocity and drive to kill. Yet the same amount of friendship."

This time there were nods and murmurs of agreement.

"Well we might as well continue Brother," Loki said. "Let's see how your boy is with a bow. Our challenge is Marksmanship."

"Marksmanship!" Odin said as he rose. "Excellent! I hope to see as close as a dual this time around."

The next round was hardly as exciting. They set up targets at different distances.

Hiccup was ready to begin his firing until Loki appeared.

"Time out," He called. "I have a quicker way of doing this and one that'll be a little more challenging."

Thor now appeared. "What did you have in mind?"

"Okay so I'm completely ripping this off a story I heard in Greece but I wanna see if it can be done,"

Loki waived a hand and a table with twelve axes embedded in it. The axes alternated direction so that they formed a small tube toward the target.

"You guys have to fire through the axes and hit the target."

Both champions looked shocked. That seemed like one impossible shot.

Adla elected to go first. Adla raised his bow and took aim. He drew back and released. The arrow struck an axe. "Wow. That's not happening."

Hiccup took his time. He didn't raise his crossbow until he thought of everything. Then he raised it and rethought everything. As he released he exhaled and let the arrow fly.

It just barely slid between the axes and toward the target driving

itself into the target.

Loki exclaimed a triumphant "Yes!"

Thor bowed his head in his small defeat.

Adla clapped his hand onto Hiccup's shoulder. "Damn Kid you're just full of surprises today."

They all returned to the Great Hall. Odin clapped his welcome. "I was truly hoping for a third bout. But before my decision is made I invite all the champions to take a moment to relax."

Adla and Hiccup met in the Hall and were met by Svartur and Skytt.

"Why do you get all the fun shots?" Skytt asked in mock jealousy. "That was amazing,"

"How about that fight?" Adla said. "I didn't realize how good you actually were. When you started stabbing me I wasn't sure I was gonna win."

"That doesn't sound weird to you?" Hiccup asked.

"Of course it does," Adla returned. "This whole thing is weird."

"That's true." Svartur agreed. "At least it's almost over."

"Oh come on," Adla said. "You haven't had any fun?"

"A little," Svartur replied.

"Well that's worth it,"

"I guess so," Svartur said. "But now it's up to Odin what you two will do. What do you guys have in mind?"

The boys both shrugged. They had no idea what could be going through the mind of the most powerful of the gods.

"Whatever it is I hope we can get it over with," Skytt said. "You guys are fun and all but I miss home."

With that all the champions agreed.

****With Toothless****

Toothless flew through the air. He had already hunted his breakfast and now he was growing bored.

With Hiccup still not around his frustration was just growing. He could not bear this anymore.

Flying wasn't even taking his mind off it. He flipped and rolled in the air. He tried his best to distract his brain from thinking of the worst possible outcomes.

I just wasn't working.

He landed outside of the Haddock house and entered it to take back his place next to his friend.

He would have to wait patiently.

Toothless sighed. Even though despair was beginning to sink in the dragon held onto the good feeling he had about today.

****With Hiccup****

Odin commanded the attention of all the people in the Hall. He had come up with the third challenge.

"You have fought with skill and strength. You have showed precision and all in all proved that both of you are worthy of the title champion. This third challenge will test you like none of the other challenges have before."

Adla and Hiccup both had a concerned look on their faces.

"One of Loki's children have come to visit us for this tournament." Odin said gesturing to Hel. "But Jormungandr is nowhere to be found. But Fenrir, as we all know, can't come to see any of us. He can't even speak much. He does, however, whine in pain from that sword in his mouth. So this challenge is who can shut him up. Who can make Fenrir finally stop his cries."

Loki was ready to protest. But Odin held a hand.

"You both will be given creams and herbs and we will see who can ease his pain the most effectively."

Both boys were stiff and unsure. Fenrir was big enough to eat Odin whole. Now they were expected to try and ease centuries of pain.

Before any comments of the contrary could be made by either side both champions were sent to Fenrir.

Both boys had seen wolves growing up. Dogs. Big dogs is all they were. But Fenrir was a beast of a different order. The wolf lay chained down to the ground. But even prone as he was he towered over either champion. Fenrir sounded to be in horrible pain. But then he saw them and his cries were muffled and replaced with a snarl directed at his new visitors.

Now appearing before the champions were tables of ointments, creams, and herbs.

Adla got working immediately. He grabbed every painkilling substance he saw and mixed them together, grinding the herbs into the ointments. Hiccup identified the most potent items on the table and tried to calculate which would give the longest term pain relief. But for everything he thought of he also thought of what happens when these are applied to an open wound. Also the sword in Fenrir's mouth wasn't just causing him pain through the wound it created but the muscle's in the wolf's jaw must be in aching pain as well.

Well Adla finished his concoction. And ran toward the wolf.

"Listen Beast," Adla started. "This is going to take the pain away."

Adla climbed into the wolf's mouth cautiously and began applying the ointment to the roof of his mouth. After one minute of applying it he stepped out and to Adla's own amazement the wolf seemed more relaxed and for a short moment the wolf's cries stopped.

But only a moment. The cries started again but now it was more of a groan. The groans were caused by the ache in his jaw. Adla completely overlooked it.

Hiccup was still thinking how he could make it work. None of what Adla did worked. So now Hiccup wasn't sure what to do.

Until he thought the only thing he could do was be himself.

He walked toward the wolf empty handed. He even discarded his weapons. As he approached the wolf he talked in a soothing tone.

"Hey Bud," He said. "That looks like it hurts. I'm gonna help you but you have to be prepared for a little more pain. Got it?"

Fenrir let out a low growl of approval.

Hiccup stepped into the mouth of the giant.

"Hiccup what are you doing?" Adla asked concerned.

"The only thing that'll actually help him." Hiccup answered.

With that Hiccup gripped the handle of the sword and pulled upward. Fenrir cried in pain as the sword's tip was driven into the gums in the roof of the mouth. Hiccup created just enough room to tilt the sword. Hiccup then bolted out of Fenrir's mouth with the obnoxiously large sword in hand as the wolf's mouth closed from exhaustion.

"Hiccup, what've you done?!" Adla yelled.

"I stopped his crying." Hiccup returned coolly.

"Thankâ€|you." Fenrir said weakly and slightly slurred.

"No problem Bud," Hiccup said. "Hope it helped,"

With that Hiccup and Adla were brought back to a war torn Valhalla. The gods were in an uproar. Even Hiccup's supporters looked slightly displeased. Hel and Loki both had a shocked but pleased look on their faces.

"Silence!" Odin bellowed. The yelling stopped and quiet came back into the Hall. "The challenge was to stop Fenrir's crying. And Hiccup did a better job. Fenrir has spent centuries tied down with a sword jammed in his mouth. It is about time it was removed. Hiccup was wise enough and compassionate enough to remove the torture from the wolf. I declare Hiccup the winner and Loki the winner of the tournament."

Loki looked very pleased with this. Thor looked defeated but also like he was relenting.

With that the tournament was finally over.

14. Chapter 14

****The overdue conclusion to this story and a cliffhanger for an ending. For those of you have it figured out and I'm sure that's the majority since I'm not that great with mysteries PM about who you think is gonna become a major antagonist in the upcoming stories. Yes there will be more and they should have more momentum than the last. For those of you have stayed loyal through this I thank you and appreciate the support. Please read review and enjoy!****

* * *

><p>The gods had accepted Odin's ruling on the matter of Fenrir. After all it was him that the gargantuan wolf was supposed to one day devour. If he could sleep easy knowing that beast had one less restraint then so could they.<p>

Loki watched as the displeased looks of the mortals and gods turned into those of appreciation at the act of mercy that Hiccup showed. The mortals congratulated him from both sides of the feud. The other gods had conceded that the boy was a true hero and that his shift in the balance could work out positively.

His daughter looked very content with the outcome. Her brother was no longer in the agonizing situation he had been in for centuries.

"So," Loki started. "Was he as interesting as you thought he'd be?"

Hel nodded. "For someone who has every right to wish me on everyone he knows he has quite the habit of doing the opposite. In his short fifteen years he's lived more compassionately and willingness to move through life than any of the gods present here."

Hel just shook her head in a confounded way but with a smile on her face.

"For a bunch of immortals we really are obsessed with death and an ending of sort but here is someone who will meet a funeral pyre one day and he's willing to rush his way there and have a Hel of a time on the way. And he's not dragging any grudges with him to it. Kinda makes us mighty beings seem pretty petty,"

Loki and Hel saw as Thor left the hall in a huff.

"Well some more so than others," Hel frowned.

_There goes the God of Thunder storming off. _Loki thought. _OH!
"Storming off!" I have to remember that._

"My brother always has been a bit of sore loser." Loki sighed. "But hopefully he'll let off some steam and this will be through."

"Why do I doubt that?" Hel asked skeptically.

"Because you're a pessimist." Loki said plainly. "It was your upbringing,"

Hel let out a small laugh.

"I'm gonna go talk to him," Loki said.

"Rubbing salt in the wound?" Hel said hopefully.

"That or patching it up," Loki said as he started off after his brother. "Haven't decided yet,"

Loki caught up with Thor outside. The air around him sparked with electricity.

"Come to brag?" Thor said furiously.

"Gimme a sec still deciding." Loki said nonchalantly.

Thor turned to him. He looked livid. "This is just a joke to you."

"You'd love to believe that wouldn't you?" Loki said calmly.

This response caught the thundering immortal off guard.

"If you could learn to laugh at yourself we wouldn't even have to fight. Your damn pride is what caused this. Your need for an enemy. Damn it Thor this is not some elaborate trick. I want to act like we're actually brothers. Be able to call on my elder brother for help. Being able to go to Midgard for some drinks and mortal girls with you. Literally anything other than having to keep a knife at your back so I can stay the hammer at my front would make me happy. I want the end of our story to be a happy one instead of one where you and I are deadlier than rocks."

"What makes you think we can? What gives you this hope?" Thor questioned in a lower and sadder tone.

"The kid you've been trying to kill showed me forgiveness is one hell of a thing."

"That still doesn't change the prophecy."

"Burn the fucking prophecy! We. Are. Gods. If humans can make their own paths in life why can't we? Why are we so bound to a cosmic plan? Join me in just this little bit of mischief brother. This little bit to show that we have just as much free will as those who inhabit Midgard."

Loki stuck out an arm toward his brother and waited.

"I'd better not regret this," Thor said grabbing his brother's arm.

"You won't," Loki said with a shining and genuine smile.

****With Hiccup****

Now that the competition was over Hiccup looked forward to getting back home. He couldn't wait to see all his friends again and go flying with Toothless.

Gods it had been too long since he had gone flying. That sensation that he had become so accustomed to, had been deprived from him for only a few days but it felt like years.

"I guess this is goodbye," Adla said.

Hiccup shook his head. "Until next time really,"

Adla smiled and nodded. "Alright. Until next time then. You're gonna show me how to ride a dragon and you and I will be the most feared Vikings in the land. I can see us now," he said with upmost confidence.

"If you say so," Hiccup laughed.

"I'd better see you soon Fishbone," Svartur said.

"Count on it," Hiccup said.

The two hugged a tight and friendly hug.

Thor and Loki reentered the hall. Many turned to face the two rivals who now arrived together.

Thor cleared his throat and it went from many to all eyes on him. "I have been bested," Thor said matter-of-factly. "Not by the child I thought young Hiccup to be but by the hero he truly is. Sometimes shaking things up can be healthy for everyone. Even for gods. And for showing me that young Haddock, I vow that no storm of mine will stand in the way of your adventures. And the seas will never feel my power when your friends are on it. I and on behalf of the all Aesir and Vanir bless you champion and hero."

There was an applause from the gods and mortals for Hiccup.

As it died down Loki came forward to talk. "Well that was just beautiful," Loki said wiping a fake tear from his eye. "But now is the time to send you guys and gals back to that frozen craphole you call a realm. The gods are honored by your loyalty and willingness to fight. May all of you champions find a warm welcome to your return."

And all of sudden Hiccup bolted upright in his bed.

"Even when there's a crowd he can't say a simple goodbye," Hiccup muttered to himself.

Then without warning Hiccup found himself pinned to the floor by a happy black mass of scales. And then he felt the slimy tongue of his best friend and steed slide over his face.

"Hey Bud," Hiccup said happily.

Toothless was beyond excited. He was so happy to see Hiccup he couldn't contain it.

"I missed you too Toothless. I missed you plenty."

Hiccup saddled up immediately and went for a flight. It was coming down to the end of the day. Almost dinner so no one was at his house and the village seemed to be quieting down. But Hiccup would get to seeing everyone else soon enough. Now was his time to enjoy the company of his closest friend in his domain.

He soared and rolled and dove. He enjoyed the sight of the sunset from his high perch. The golden rays of the setting sun cast a breathtaking glow over his home of Berk.

"Can't believe I missed this place," Hiccup said. Then he sighed. "I guess it's not really that unbelievable."

He smiled. It was great to be able to call this place home and mean it. This was the place he wanted to live in. He wanted to marry and have kids here. He wanted to rule and lead here. He didn't acknowledge this sudden feeling but he knew it was there in the back of his head.

He wasn't afraid anymore. Ruling could be good. He would lead his people like his father and his before him.

"Well Bud," Hiccup said. "Let's head on home before dinner,"

****With Astrid****

It was almost dinner. Astrid felt as though she just needed to check on Hiccup. She hadn't seen him all day. She needed someone to tell her worries to. Even if he wasn't there to really listen.

Astrid was just about to the Haddock house when the door opened.

Astrid froze. It had to be the Chief. It had to be. _It has to be._

Out of the house walked a young Viking with red hair, a handsome face, a small body and a metal leg. The young Viking turned and froze just like Astrid.

"Ohâ€|hey Astrid." Hiccup said.

With those words Astrid knew he was real. She covered the remaining distance with blinding speed.

"Whoa whoa whoa!"

Astrid tackled him in a hug. Hiccup braced himself but it didn't matter. He landed on his back in the girl's embrace. Hiccup prepared himself for the questioning but it didn't happen. At least not immediately.

She just held him there on the ground. In silence that Astrid kept as long as she could because she didn't want him to hear the cracks in her voice. Hiccup understood so he just held her back. More than

happy to avoid an explanation.

It felt like a blissful eternity of five minutes until Astrid decided to get up and help up her boyfriend.

Then without warning Hiccup received a punch to his arm.

"Wh- What was that for?!"

"Where in the Hel have you been?" Astrid asked.

"It wasn't Hel," Hiccup mumbled.

"What?"

"I said I was sleeping. I don't know," Hiccup returned.

"Well why for so long?"

"If I said it was really nice dream about you what would you say?"

Astrid stopped. She blushed but was still indignant. "I'd sayâ€¦ I'd say you were full of crap." She said. "But really sweet as well,"

Hiccup smiled knowing he was off the hook for now. He grabbed Astrid by the waist and kissed her. It wasn't overly long or passionate. Caring and to the point.

"Come on," Hiccup said. "Help your cripple of a boyfriend down to dinner. I think that tackle took more out of me than the coma,"

Astrid smiled and rolled her eyes. She knew it was just an excuse for him to put his arm around her and have hers around him. But she didn't point it out. She just enjoyed the walk with the dumbest and most relieved smile on her face.

****With the Gang****

Fishlegs was still worried about his suspicions. He had only told Astrid about it. He didn't want to push it off on the others. He was a pretty smart guy but at this moment he wanted Hiccup to be here to take care of the thinking.

Ruff and Tuff sat at the table as well and so did Snotlout. They were awaiting dinner to start and wondering where Astrid was.

The doors opened and in walked Astrid with her arm around none other than Hiccup.

The gang's jaws collectively hit the floor as they saw their friend who had been MIA for nearly a week. Snotlout felt relief wash over him. The week of stress and worry was finally over.

"Long time no see Chief," Tuff got up to greet him. "D'you fall in a well or something?"

"Noâ€¦" Hiccup said grabbing his neck and laughing

uncomfortably.

"Well it's about time you're back," Ruffnut said. "Wouldn't want you missing another sinking ship,"

Hiccup gave a confused.

"We'll get to that," Snot said not getting up to greet his cousin. "For now let's all give Hiccup some space,"

Hiccup couldn't believe Snot had helped him out.

There were murmurs of agreement and everyone sat down. Dinner was starting anytime soon.

Then in walked the Chief. Stoick made his wayâ€| uh-humâ€| stoically to the throne. He turned to face his tribes. Scanning the faces to see who was there and who was not. Gobber, his brother Spitelout, Hiccup and his friends.

Wait!

Stoick had to make sure he had seen his son. Sure enough sitting there was his amputee son staring right back at him. Hiccup simply nodded and raised his cup of water. Stoick smiled widely. A father who had a son nearly die once and then not wake up could only share his relief.

Stoick went through with dinner. He even called for extra mead to be brought into the hall. Stoick was going to celebrate his son's return even if the rest of the tribe didn't notice.

"So what's this about a ship sinking?" Hiccup asked wanting to get caught up. He noticed Fish shift uncomfortably. Even Astrid got quiet and seemed off.

"Really weird," Ruff said. "We noticed some ship sinking off shore so we all set off and rescued the sailors,"

"Okay," Hiccup said. "But what's weird? I mean it could've been a rock or something,"

Tuff shook his head. "Too far off shore,"

"Well what did the sailors say it was?"

"A dragon," Snotlout said.

Hiccup became very solemn. "No," he said defensively.

"Relax," Snot said. "I didn't say we agreed with them,"

Now Hiccup was confused. "Well what do we think it was?"

Snot and the twins shrugged.

"Actually," Astrid said speaking up. "Fishlegs has a theory."

Hiccup turned the rotund boy. "What is it?"

Fish sighed. "From the descriptions given I don't think it's a dragon," Fish stopped. "I don't know how it's possible butâ€¦ I think it's a sea serpent."

There was silence among the teens.

"I thought the only two left we had killed," Fish said.

Well there's Jormungandr. Hiccup thought.

"But there's no dragon that could've done what this one did,"

Hiccup gave a questioning look.

The group went on to explain the stranger the sailors picked up and the strange box on his back. They also explained how the serpent had been inside the ship. The group concluded that the stranger was the only way the beast could've gotten aboard the ship.

"Who the hell was this guy?" Snot said. "And how does he have a sea serpent on hand?"

"How does the thing go from fitting in a box to ripping through a boat is what I want to know?" Astrid said.

Hiccup thought. He couldn't find a reasonable explanation but he did think of the next course of action. "We need to find this thing and end it," Hiccup said coldly. "We saw that there's no intelligence in it. I would really want to try and reason with it but there is none. I'm sure of it. It's a killing machine and until it's dead we need to shut down Viking trade on the Sea. I'll talk to my dad. We'll all have to ride out to spread the word."

There were nods of agreement.

"But for now let's all enjoy the night. It's great to see you guys,"

"Ah don't get all soft on us now Chief," Tuff said getting up with his sister. "We'll catch up with you all in a bit. We've got some Thorston business to attend to."

Undoubtedly stealing some mead or causing mischief.

"I'm gonna head home," Fish said. "I'm gonna start a contingency plan for this trade route crisis,"

"Sounds good Fish," Hiccup said.

"Astrid if you wouldn't mind I wanna speak to my cousin alone," Snotlout said suddenly.

"Sure Snot," Astrid said confused. She got up and walked away.

"What's up Snot?" Hiccup said warily.

"I wanted to tell you this before youâ€¦fell asleep,"

"Ohâ€¦" Hiccup said. "So you knew about the wholeâ€¦"

"Yeah," Snot said. "I was at your bedside almost every day at least once,"

"That'sâ€¦ kinda weird, not gonna lie."

"Yeah I know but I really want to get this off my chest," Snot took a deep breath. "I'm sorry. I'm sorry for everything. For beating on you and ragging on you and never standing by your side. All around being the shittiest cousin in Midgard. You never did a thing to deserve that. So I'm sorry and I'm begging you to forgive me andâ€¦"

"Done."

"Waitâ€¦ what?" Snot said.

"Forgiven. Done. Finished. That part of our lives is over."

"Just like that?"

"Just like that."

The two cousins just stared at each other for a moment. "I don't think I'll ever understand you Hiccup,"

"Oh well," Hiccup said. "You don't have to. But I do appreciate the apology. Hope you feel better from it,"

Snot nodded.

"Good," Hiccup said. "Now if you'll excuse me I have to see if I can dance with my foot andâ€¦ this," Hiccup said smiling and holding up his false foot.

Hiccup quickly found Astrid and dragged her out onto the dance floor.

"Well you're bold tonight," Astrid said.

"Built up energy from being asleep so long," Hiccup joked.

The two danced Viking jigs and hornpipes. And then came a slow waltz from the musicians. They slowed and held each other close and spoke softly.

"So what were you doing sleeping for so long?" Astrid asked.

"I promise one day you'll know but for now I'm not in a position to tell you." Hiccup sounded lighthearted in the explanation but there was an undertone of cryptic worry.

"You haven't broken a promise yet so why should I doubt you now?" Astrid said enjoying the dance. "But whatever's got you all scared better find out real quick who you're dating or it's gonna have some major pain coming it's way."

"I wouldn't doubt it," Hiccup kissed his girlfriend.

He was happy to be back home. His home in Berk.

****On a distant island.****

"The beast is in the water now," came the voice of a sickly man with a hood and a mask over his face. "I hope it killed every Viking on board. If I placed it right it should be in the waters around the horrible little twit who had the nerve to humiliate me,"

The man paced back and forth as his small party of soldiers listened to him prattle on about his assumed victory.

"With any luck the young serpent will sink quite a few of those pompous Vikings. I'm sure it's hungry." The man looked at the horizon searching for a ship to pick up him and his men. "Where is this ship?"

"We're unsure my Lord," one of the grotesque soldiers spoke up.

My Lord. It sounded so good in the man's ears. His new found royalty was something he enjoyed greatly.

He gazed up at the moon and silently cursed the gods, the dragons and the humans. His day has come to slaughter and pillage.

"Dawn is coming men," the mysterious stranger said. "We will bring about a new age for our kind and drive the humans back into caves. We will take what is ours and never starve again."

Small utterances of excitement lit up the men.

"Finally," the man said. "There's my ship,"

End
file.